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Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee, for thou art my God! Thy Spirit is good. Lead me in a plain country!—*Psalm 143. 10.*

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY.

King George of England has let it be known that he reads a chapter of the Bible every day.

The United Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions has adopted in an appeal for support the slogan, **"The Furtherance Fellowship,"** based upon Philippians 1. 12.

Evidently some persons carry their religion with them when they go away on a vacation, for in the **Yosemite Valley** last summer more people attended church services than attended the theater, and the free-will offerings at the church were greater than the receipts at the theater.

The Christian Witness to Israel (521 West 179th Street, New York,) maintains an electrically-lit showcase before the mission. On the glass is the Hebrew lettering of Deuteronomy 6. 4, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one!" Opened tracts, letters and Bibles are on exhibition. Many stop to read these, and thus afford opportunities for personal work.

An unusual example of city evangelization in Chicago was a **systematic home-to-home distribution of a gospel tract,** "The Man That Died for Me," the well known narrative by Mrs. J. K. Barney. A half million such booklets were placed under the direction of the Bible Institute Colportage Association (D. L. Moody, founder,) at the request and expense of a former citizen of that metropolis, who as a boy worked in a print shop and sold papers in Chicago streets.

The "Continent" states that **Dr. Francis L. Patton,** most widely known as president of Princeton Theological Seminary, is preparing a book, to be entitled "Fundamental Christianity," which will help materially in clearing the beclouded theological atmosphere.

Dr. Patton is 82, but he is as clear and independent a thinker as ever. He made his earlier reputation by exposing the unorthodoxy of Dr. David Swing of Chicago.

A Library School for training colored librarians has been opened at Hampton Institute through the generosity of the Carnegie Foundation.

This new Library School is the 19th school for librarians established in this country since the first school was founded by Dr. Melville Dewey in 1887. Candidates are required to have had one year of college training, which will count towards the degree of B. S., which will be given upon the completion of four years of college work in the Institute.

More than 25,000 Sunday school children are expected to participate in a religious song service on the Sesqui-centennial Anniversary grounds at Philadelphia next October. The service is being sponsored by the Philadelphia Sabbath Association at the suggestion of the Sesqui-centennial's executive and religious committee.

All of the 725 Sunday schools of the city have been invited to send representatives. The music will be conducted by H. O. Lincoln.

The Jews made such a protest against filming the "Merchant of Venice" that the projectors gave it up, or at least will greatly emasculate it, leaving Shylock out. To avoid wounding the feelings of Roman Catholics "The Hunchback of Notre Dame"

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was drastically changed. Now the new screen version of "Riders of the Purple Sage" has been withdrawn, and will be emasculated at the demand of the Mormon church. The movies will now be compelled to limit their efforts at insulting religious classes altogether to the Protestant ministry. They can do this with perfect safety, as Protestants do not care enough to protest.

The impression widely entertained that foreigners are responsible for more than their share of the **crime committed in this country** is not quite borne out by some recent figures. They have been charged with committing "more than 60 per cent of our crimes of violence," but while the murder rate for each 100,000 of the population is 65 in Memphis, which has the unhappy distinction of standing at the head of American cities in murder, the foreign element in its citizenship is only 3 per cent. Cleveland, with 30 per cent of foreigners, has only 18 murders to the 100,000, and New York with 38 per cent of foreign population has a murder rate of only 5.

The Society for Providing Evangelical Religious Literature for the Blind, Philadelphia, announces that it is issuing a small collection of **standard hymns in Revised Braille,** Grade 1½. The book will have 60 pages, 9 x 11 inches, and contain 54 hymns (words only), a hymn to a page. A few hymns especially for children are included. The meter and usual tune are given with each hymn.

The size and number of pages have been restricted to make an inexpensive book that can be easily handled and carried about. Embossed books are usually expensive, as well as bulky. Practically every embossed volume costs several dollars. As an aid to the blind, the Society is supplying this hymn book, postage prepaid, for 50¢ a copy, bound in cardboard with cloth hinge. Some copies will be in special cloth binding at 90¢ each. This is below cost.

Orders for the book should be sent to the Secretary, S. P. E. R. L., 210 Bible House, Astor Place, New York City.

The American Association for the Advancement of Atheism was refused a charter of incorporation by Supreme Court Justice Mitchell in New York City. The purpose of the Association, as set forth in the petition for a charter, is "purely destructive." It plans to publish and distribute scientific and anti-religious literature, and conduct a general propaganda against churches and clergy, to "contribute to the building of a better civilization by operating as a wrecking company, leaving to others the designing and establishing of the new order."

Its president declared: "Since church and state are separate under the law of the country, its courts have no valid reason for objecting to an antireligious body." He maintains that the organization was not formed for an unlawful purpose.

The recent International Triennial Convention of the Y. M. C. A. of North America elected as president, Charles P. Taft, who at the age of 28 is the youngest man by far to occupy this position. He is said to have filled the position well.

"Son of his father, Chief Justice Taft, a lawyer of Cincinnati, member of the Episcopal church, and teacher of a Sunday-school class, he has believed in service ever since as a boy he entered the boys' branch in Washington. At Yale and since college days he has been one of the leaders in the student movement, and is helping to put the 'Y' more prominently in the name, together with the 'C.' This is all in the line of Dr. Mott's urging that the Associations be kept true to their origin as primarily for young men and boys, who must accordingly be trained for responsibility and then given it."

Yale Divinity School has been broadcasting six radio lectures from Station WJZ for the benefit of ministers and all others who are interested in religion and service. The first lecture was given by President Angell of Yale on "Education and Service." The next speaker was Rev. Robert L. Calhoun, whose topic was "Religion and Science." Professor Luther A. Weigle, professor of Christian Nurture in Yale, discussed "Religion and the Schools." Professor Jerome Davis, who occupies the chair of Practical Philanthropy at Yale, spoke on "Religion and Social Science." The final addresses were given by Dean Charles R. Brown of the Yale Divinity School.

Christian Endeavorers are preparing

for an intensive week, now fixed for the first seven days in February next. Besides stressing the Endeavor life of service, a **Clark Recognition Fund** of $100,000 is to be raised that week if possible. This fund is for the personal benefit of Dr. Francis E. Clark, and Mrs. Clark, during their lives. After their death it is to go to the missionary campaigns of Endeavorers. During all the years of his service as head of Christian Endeavor, Dr. Clark never received a salary from Endeavorers, or from any official religious body.

Endeavorers are entering upon what they term a loyalty campaign and Sunday observance, and it is stated that so marked is the interest that 100,000 responses have been received, pledging service in some form.

An acute situation has arisen in the Protestant Episcopal diocese of West Virginia, where the health board has forbidden the use of **the common chalice,** and threatened the bishop with arrest and prosecution, but delayed action until after the General Convention.

The House of Bishops adopted the following resolution:

"Resolved: That the bishops of this church extend to the bishop of West Virginia their deep sympathy in the conflict which has arisen in his diocese between the established use of the church in the matter of administering the Holy Communion and the laws of the state of West Virginia bearing on the subject. The bishops find themselves unable to change the Prayer Book usage, which is supported by the authority of the Constitution of the church, but they declare their confidence in the ability of the bishop of West Virginia to take such action in the matter as may satisfy the civil authorities of his state, without departing from the essential principles which are involved in the sacrament instituted by our Lord for a perpetual remembrance of his redemptive work."

Bishop John G. Murray of Maryland has been chosen by his episcopal brethren to be the titular head, "Presiding Bishop," of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. He is one of many priests of that communion who received their early religious impressions and their ministerial training among the Methodists. He came to

Week of Prayer.
January 3-9.

Monday, 4th. Thanksgiving and Humiliation.
Tuesday, 5th. The Church Universal—the One Body of Which Christ is the Head.
Wednesday, 6th. Nations and Their Leaders.
Thursday, 7th. Missions.
Friday, 8th. Families, Schools, Colleges, and the Young.
Saturday, 9th. The Home Base.

Drew Theological Seminary in 1879 from a Methodist home in Kansas, by way of Wyoming Seminary (1876-79), but was obliged by circumstances to postpone his preparation for the ministry and to go into business. His religious zeal, however, continued unabated. As a layman he was active in the Protestant Episcopal Church, and thirty-two years ago took orders in that communion. His zeal and talents gained him rapid advancement. In 1903 and 1904 he declined successive elections as bishop of Mississippi and of Kentucky, but in 1909 became bishop coadjutor and in 1911 bishop of Maryland. He now takes office as the official head of his church.

Methodists have no regret that the two men at the head of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ and the Protestant Episcopal Church, Dr. S. Parkes Cadman and Bishop Murray, were brought up in Methodist homes and studied in Methodist schools.—"Christian Advocate."

Through its **National Catholic Rural Life Conference** the Roman Catholic church announces a purpose to enter rural life of America to an extent it has never yet done. The conference states that out of more than 20,000 Roman Catholic priests in service, fewer than 2000 are in rural parishes or missions. Instead, they are in the large cities, and in many cases they are in down-town districts of those cities, with often many priests attached to the same parish.

At a recent meeting of priests of the Roman Catholic church, assigned to solve some of the rural tasks, dioceses in fifteen states were represented. Some laymen were added to a new board of control, and plans were made both to establish some new seminaries and to install instructors in old ones, especially for the training of priests for rural service.

States wherein the conference says there is great lack of Roman Catholic churches include Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Texas, Indiana, Alabama and Illinois. An official of the conference has been detached to visit Europe, and there learn if possible how the rural problem has been solved. Returning, this official is to give a course on rural work at Notre Dame University. The conference says it is convinced that the numerical weakness of the Roman Catholic church in the Southern states can be overcome if rural work is properly studied and then promoted in those states.

1900th Anniversary.

According to Andrews' "Life of Our Lord," as well as many other authorities, Jesus began his public ministry early in A. D. 27, his baptism having occurred probably in January of that year, when he was about thirty years of age, says the director of the Great Commission Prayer League. If A. D. 27 were the correct date of the beginning of his ministry, would not A. D. 1927 be the 1900th anniversary of that beginning? And if so, should it not be observed in some reverent, suitable manner?

The year 1926 ends on Friday, and on the following Sunday, January 2, the Week of Prayer appointed by the World's Evangelical Alliance begins. Watch Night meetings on the last night of the old year have long been common throughout the world. A season of prayer from Friday, December 31, 1926, to Sunday, January 9, 1927, would cover exactly ten days. Why not the world-wide observance of such a season in united prayer, he asks.

A Romance of Evangelism.

We will tell it as we heard it from the lips of a Methodist pastor, omitting names, dates and places, which might identify the persons, all of whom are living.

"When pastor at —— it was my practice to add at least 100 members to the church each year. Many were 'hand-picked.'

"Just before Easter I approached a man of our constituency, a business man of standing, and invited him to join the church the next Sunday. After some hesitation he consented. I had a good time with my Easter sermon, and closed expectantly with the invitation. My 'prospect' sat unmoved. I urged the present moment as the time of times to join, but he seemed anchored to his pew. Just then a little boy slipped out of his seat and came forward. I am afraid I would have sent him back to wait for a more convenient season had I dared, I was so disappointed, for the lad was a waif of the town, and I was expecting one of the pillars of society. Still I greeted him, and just then my business man slipped his anchor, and came and stood by the boy at the altar. Together we prayed, and together the strangely assorted pair joined the church on probation.

Before we parted the gentleman kindly asked the boy what he meant to be when he grew up. The answer came like a flash, as from a mind long made up: 'I want to be a Christian college professor!'

"That Easter morning was a good many years ago. I left that charge in course of time, and left that part of the country. But one day a dozen years later I had an invitation from my adult probationer of that Easter service, asking me to take dinner at his residence. I went, and found a company of friends of the old days, and in the guest of the evening, a young man just appointed to a chair of instruction in one of our leading colleges, I recognized the neglected and unprized lad who had been the first at the altar on that never-to-be-forgotten Easter morning."—"Christian Advocate."

Great Commission Prayer League.

The first leaflet of the Great Commission Prayer League of Chicago was published in 1910, but it was not until the summer of 1915 that the League stepped out by faith and embarked alone. Its small beginnings (1910 to 1915) had been in the office of the Testimony Publishing Company, through the kind permission of the "Two Christian Laymen" who published and circulated widely the twelve volumes known as "The Fundamentals."

During these ten years ("to God's glory be it said,") the League has scrupulously avoided debt; has never asked for a single human endorsement; has endeavored to keep man wholly in the background; has waited upon God daily in seasons of united prayer; has tithed all its receipts (since 1917), applying these tithes to needy places outside its own work at home and abroad; has been enabled through the gifts of God's people to print and distribute OVER 75,000,000 PAGES

As she was found.

As she is at the age of four.

Azadouhi, a child saved by Near East Relief.

of gospel leaflets; has received reports of OVER 150,000 CONVERTED SOULS, not counting those in great evangelistic campaigns; has been used of God to help restore Watch Night to the church, and make it a night of prayer; also to help the church to see the need of worldwide revival, and to pray therefor. For the League believes that revival will hasten evangelization, and that evangelization will hasten completion of the body of Christ, and that simultaneously with the completion of the body will be the coming of the Lord,—three inseparably linked events.

Day of Prayer for Missions: Feb. 19, 1926.

MRS. HELEN BARRETT MONTGOMERY.

The annual Day of Prayer for Missions, held under the auspices of the Council of Women for Home Missions and the Federation of Woman's Boards of Foreign Missions of North America, has become a fixed feast in the Christian year, to which thousands of women look forward with eager expectation.

The program for this year has already been prepared by a joint committee of the Federation and the Council.

The theme is: "IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER."

The committee decided that as this year is to be signalized by the study of prayer as a force in the mission enterprise, the attempt should be made to have the day really devoted to prayer; that we should come together for thanksgiving, communion and intercession, and that instruction and inspiration, furnished through addresses, should be minimized. Definite periods are assigned for thanksgiving and for meditation. The prayers are made definite. Responsive readings are provided in which God's great promises are recited. Intercessions for great causes are stressed. Songs are interspersed.

It is suggested that the offering on the day, as in former years, be devoted to causes that belong to all denominations. In the home field the offering will go toward the work among farm and cannery migrants; in the foreign field for women's union Christian colleges and Christian literature for women and children.

The condition of the world in which we live certainly summons us to prayer with a great, compelling voice. If we can only unite the hearts of the Christian women of America in an outpouring of their souls to God, we may help mightily in these times of crisis.

PRAYING ATHLETES.

Public prayer anywhere but in church and by any one but a preacher has been regarded in some circles—perhaps especially among younger men,—as a sign of weakness and womanishness. This theory received a blow last year when a husky football team from Center College, Danville, Ky., knelt in the field and prayed for strength before their battle with Harvard. It received a second blow when Edgar W. Garbisch, all-American center, tennis star, and 1925 graduate of West Point, made the statement recently that he never went into a game without praying.

The story of West Point's praying team is related by Robert F. Kelley in a recent article in "Association Men." Garbisch told Mr. Kelley how he went to the football coaches at West Point and asked for their coöperation in putting into practice his theories of prayer and clean sportsmanship. And he told of the first time the team prayed together, before a game with Yale.

"It was a mighty sight to see those boys," he said. "They all tore off their headguards, Protestant, Catholics, and others. We joined together in a little circle. I don't know exactly what I prayed, but it wasn't for victory. It was simply that we asked God to permit us to go into action with a clean heart, acquit ourselves like men, give our best all the time, and maintain a Christian attitude throughout the game. Then we turned and ran out on the field. We prayed before every game after that.

"And there wasn't a single penalty all season for unsportsmanlike play. Nor did I at any time during the season hear cursing or obscene language used by any member of the team."

Now we find that the Pittsburgh "Methodist Recorder's" enthusiasm over the world series baseball games pervaded even the editorial columns. Here we learn that William McKechnie, manager of the champion nine, "is a successful Sunday school teacher, a man of prayer, and a champion of every good cause." Reporters calling at his home found "on the table three Bibles, all showing signs of use." The secretary of the Pittsburgh League Club is a member of the Methodist Protestant Church.

The "Recorder" further says:

"These two men are but leaders of the prevailing type of Christian manhood among the champions of 1925. Mr. McKechnie describes them as clean-living and clean-fighting ballplayers, and in a talk with the editor he paid tribute to the lofty character of the Christians of every creed represented in his victorious club. While Pittsburgh is no saint among the cities, she has this to her credit before God and man, that Sunday baseball is unknown at Forbes Field, the playground of the Pirates. If the authorities of the two great contending leagues would but follow this example, they would contribute richly to the soul of America, make their players vastly more efficient by that much-needed day of rest, and win for themselves the blessing of the God of Sinai."

STATISTICAL.

The "Five Year Program to Win a Million" of the **Disciples of Christ,** launched at the St. Louis convention in 1920, has come to a close with the goal attained. The grand total of world membership is given at 1,530,068; of whom all but about 85,000 are in the United States and Canada. The others are chiefly in Australia, Europe, and ten mission fields.

The Protestant Episcopal church had a good financial showing at the triennial convention held at New Orleans.

The Women's Auxiliary presented a United Thank Offering for the three-year period of $904,514.77, an increase of $223,369 over the offering of 1922.

The Church School Birthday Thank Offering, used for work in Liberia, realized $21,339.

It was estimated that there would be a possible total deficit at the end of the current year of a million and a half unless the mission work was seriously curtailed, but pledges were taken which took care of this total.

The Evangelical church has been celebrating the jubilee of its Board of Missions. It reports 966 mission stations, manned by 1054 missionaries. There are 1663 organized congregations, with a membership of 106,394. Sunday schools number 1846, with 185,524 pupils. During the past year there were 9192 conversions, not including Germany. Accessions to the churches numbered 11,507, averaging over 10 for each missionary. Property on mission fields is valued at eleven and a half millions. Disbursements for the year were $474,263.

This church commenced work in the old lands of the Reformation 75 years ago, and now includes Germany, Switzerland, France, Poland and Latvia in its ministry. There are 141 missions, served by 172 missionaries, who reported over 3000 conversions last year. The membership has passed 32,500. In 576 Sunday schools there are about 50,000 scholars.

An analysis of what became of **the Presbyterian dollar** in the year 1924-25 has been made public by Dr. W. R. Patterson, chairman of the Finance Department of the Presbyterian General Council. Dr. Patterson scrutinized all of the national accounts of the Presbyterian denomination involved in the total receipts of nearly $58,000,000, and found that each of these dollars was apportioned as follows:

	Cents
Congregational expense	72.89
Miscellaneous benevolence	6.11
General Assembly	.65
National missions	8.55
Foreign missions	6.51
Education	3.06
Pensions	2.03
Bible Society	.15
Federal Council	.05
	100.00

The Brotherhood of Saint Andrew held its 40th Annual Convention at Pittsburgh, and reported 1067 chartered and probationary chapters, with a total membership of 9046. It receives $40,000 a year from the National Council, about half of what is required for its budget.

The Brotherhood is laying increased emphasis on the spiritual. It stresses evangelism, and is promoting training camps.

> Keep our hearts, O Lord, in that realm of the Spirit where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, where knowledge is wide, where words come from the depths of truth, where tireless striving wins towards perfection, where the clear stream of reason loses not its way but flows on in deeper thought and ever widening action! Grant this, O Lord, for the honor of thy Son, Jesus Christ! Amen.

A National Corporate Communion of the confirmed men and boys of the church was initiated by the Brotherhood eight years ago. It has become one of the important events in the church's yearly program. It is held on the first Sunday in Advent, and last year more than six hundred parishes coöperated by having the service.

The organized effort to bring back the custom of family prayer in church homes, which was begun by the Brotherhood four years ago, is making steady though only slow progress. Much education must accompany this effort before any large results will be obtained. A carefully organized but quiet effort pressed with unremitting diligence for a long period of years will meet with success. Such an effort the Brotherhood has begun, and is prepared to carry through. The "Manual of Family Prayers," issued jointly by the Daughters of the King and the Brotherhood, has the strong endorsement of the authorities of the church, and seems to meet satisfactorily the general need.

According to figures just compiled by the **Seamen's Church Institute of New York,** more than 20,000 seamen annually attend religious services at the Institute. The interest of seafaring men in the religious and social work of the Institute is further shown by the fact that three times as many men attend entertainments at 25 South Street now as when the building was opened in 1913. Almost 60,000 seamen were present at affairs of this character last year.

The Institute conducts its religious work on the basis that a religious leader of force, directness and comprehension is required in dealing with the spiritual life of men who follow the sea. The attitude is taken that

seamen learn as much from what is done for them as from what is said to them, and by a fusion of the two forms of welfare activity the Institute has given strength to its religious life.

A chaplain engaged by the Religious Department supervises and directs the religious work at marine hospitals in the Port of New York. He also arranges for hospital visitation, to give sick seamen the benefit of both spiritual and material help.

In addition to the regular services conducted in the Institute's Chapel of Our Saviour, the Religious Department has charge of a midweek service, which leading New York clergymen and their choirs conduct in the chapel.

A Fellowship Club, organized by the Institute for seamen of the world, holds weekly social gatherings for the purpose of making seamen feel at home in New York. The gatherings are regarded as one of the most beneficial features of the Institute's work.

A THREE-YEAR PROGRAM FOR THE Y. M. C. A.

Rev. Howard B. Grose, D. D.

"The chief concern of the leadership of the Association movement in all its parts is how to augment the spiritual vitality and productivity of the Association," says Dr. John R. Mott in suggesting the bases of a three-year program for the Young Men's Christian Associations of North America. The program forecasts, in the light of the fields, conditions and time trends, the cardinal points of policy on which the efforts should unite.

A summary of the points emphasized follows:

1. In the front line of policy should be placed the augmenting and strengthening of the leadership. Wisely directed, concerted plans should be put in operation to increase greatly the voluntary lay forces. The secret of propagating the movement in the most vital manner is through right personalities: they transcend all calculation.

2. There should be a great increase in the material resources,—$50,000,000 in the United States alone in investments in modern buildings and partial endowments, while the period should see the successful launching of the fifth foreign Association building program to establish model buildings in another chain of important political, commercial and educational centers throughout Latin America, Asia and Europe.

3. The Association movement must minister to vastly greater numbers of young men and boys. There are totally unoccupied areas claiming attention. The Association forces must project their activities far more widely in their communities. They must not lose their propagating power, and to this end their work must be of such high quality that it will be worthy of propagation. The problem of vitalizing the membership with the spirit of service is of supreme concern.

4. The Association must be brought to realize the power it possesses for helping to solve the most serious problems of our generation. Among these are social unrest, especially in the industrial areas; the racial antagonisms which have become more and more acute and inflamed in recent years on every continent where the American Associations are at work; growth of crime and lawlessness and other down-grade tendencies among the youth; international misunderstandings, fears, ambitions, bitterness and strife; failure to dominate and utilize for the highest purposes the enormous material energy and incomparable scientific enlightenment and penetrating philosophy of the present day for the furtherance of the kingdom of God in the life of men; and the readjustment of relationships between men and women.

5. The inquiry now being conducted under the guidance of the World's Committee with special reference to the attitude of youth toward religion, toward organized Christianity, toward Jesus Christ, toward one another and current questions, has advanced far enough to prompt the startling query as to whether the Y in America and elsewhere may not have lost touch with reality. Do we know our facts? Do we know what our youth are thinking about and what they believe? Are we aware of the tides of new thought and social passion surging through their minds and hearts? Are our program, methods and message calculated to arrest their attention and call forth their heroic and sacrificial allegiance? Are we alert to the implications of the timeless gospel of Jesus Christ for this particular generation? The next three years

must see the frank, thorough-going, satisfying answers to these penetrating questions. Such answers, and what they logically imply, may mean nothing less than a reorientation, perchance a rebirth, of the Y. M. C. A.

6. We are summoned to improve the one opportunity which has come, or is ever likely to come to the American Associations to place their ideas and experience at the service of the religious forces of Europe.

7. The chief concern of the leadership, however, is how to augment the spiritual vitality and productivity of the Associations. We have before us a fight for life. The dangers are not so much those from without as those from within. We devitalize our gospel when we permit ourselves to think, or give others the impression, that it is not powerful enough to meet and overcome all possible dangers and difficulties, both within and without. A genuine experience of the saving power and presence of the living Christ must come to have its truly central place.

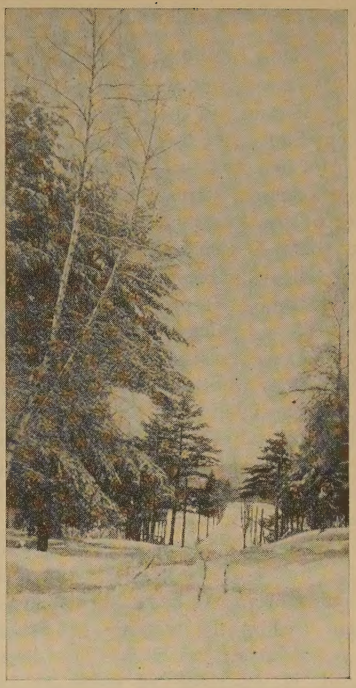
OTHER LANDS.

Every night at the **Wembley Exhibition, London,** at the end of the tattoo in the stadium, "Abide with Me," was sung by an assembly of between 50,000 and 100,000 persons.

Much interest has been aroused in England by the proposal of the Bishop of Truro and Dr. Garvie, embodied in the memoranda of recent conferences on reunion which have taken place at Lambeth, namely, that **Nonconformist bishops** should be appointed within areas which might be made conterminous with existing dioceses.

It is recognized that the proposal is put forward tentatively, and that no denomination is in any sense committed, but the scheme is expected to attract wide attention and to be the subject of much discussion among all the churches concerned.

Over 100 students were enrolled in the School of Methods for Sunday School Teachers which was recently held under the auspices of the Sunday School Association in **Czecho-Slovakia.** The location was in Sazava, a beautiful spot in Bohemia. All parts of the Czecho-Slovakia republic were represented by the 106 students who



A Bit of Northfield in Winter.

attended during the eleven days. Fifteen tents were used.

Thirty-six lectures were given. The subjects included the study of the Bible, Palestine, Pedagogy, Psychology, and methods related to the various departments of the Sunday school. Daily devotional periods were conducted by Rev. A. Novotny, secretary of the Czecho-Slovakia Sunday School Association. Physical and recreational hours were included. A volley ball match with the Y. M. C. A. from Prague was won by the Sunday school teachers.

Diplomas were distributed at the close of the camp school. The diploma bears the representation of an open Bible with the notation, "John 15. 5—I am the vine, ye are the branches." A branch of the vine is resting on the Bible, and it is the emblem of the Czecho-Slovakia Sunday School Association.

The Association is seeking to introduce new methods of religious education into the church educational scheme. It was organized in 1921, and has now more than 10,000 members. Its leaders are convinced that the religious instruction in public

schools is not sufficient in developing the spiritual forces of children.

King Saul and Bethshan.

In the concluding chapter of the First Book of Samuel, in the record of the death of King Saul after the battle of Gilboa, we are informed that the Philistines, in an hour of victory, "triumphed over" the dead bodies of the king and his sons: they fastened them to the wall of Bethshan, and placed the armor of the king in the house of Ashtaroth.

This story, going back to a thousand years before Christ, has been marvelously revived as a result of excavations on the spot in connection with the expedition sent by the University Museum of Pennsylvania. The Bethshan of ancient days became the Scythopolis of Roman times, and is today known as Beisan.

On September 30 the excavators discovered an image of the goddess with a shrine containing bronze serpents, doves, and other objects used in the worship of Ashtaroth. The temple itself, which has now been uncovered, is described as being an oblong structure with three columns on each side. In the cornerstone was a casket containing electrum ingots and other objects. It is believed that evidence may be discovered to show that the temple was destroyed by King David.

Thus we are all the time reaching surprises in regard to oldtime life in the lands of the East, and from first to last the discoveries confirm the Book which is precious beyond all books with faithful Christians, though so easily brushed on one side by those who are ignorant of its purpose and message.—"Christian."

World Christian Endeavor Convention.

Christian Endeavorers are making unusual plans for the World's Christian Endeavor Convention which is to be held in London July 16-21, 1926. Headquarters will be in the Crystal Palace, which already has been engaged. The Albert Memorial Hall and the Queen's Hall in London also have been secured for some of the meetings.

London is one of the largest Christian Endeavor centers in the world, with a total of 520 societies gathered from all denominations into nineteen local unions.

The Endeavorers hope to make this convention a great meeting for promoting peace and goodwill, especially among the young people of the hitherto warring countries of Europe. In every nation in Europe, large and small, are Christian Endeavor societies, aggregating hundreds of thousands of members, and special pains will be taken to bring representatives from all these countries to London, and to show them the fraternal affection which exists for them on the part of the Christian young people of Great Britain and America. They will be entertained free of charge by the Londoners, and every effort will be made to show them that the war is a thing of the past, and that all can begin to turn a new furrow.

The Church of England, as well as the leaders of all the Non-Conformist denominations are heartily interested. The archbishop of Canterbury has agreed to voice the welcome of the British Endeavorers, and the bishop of London is a leading member of the committee of arrangements. So is Rev. J. D. Jones, chairman of the Congregational Union, Mrs. George Cadbury, chairman of the Free Church Council, and the leaders of all the principal denominations of Great Britain.

Delegates are expected from Australia, South Africa, India and China, and hundreds will go from the ranks of American Endeavorers.

This convention will have as its motto, "The Youth of the World for Christ and the Church." The daily program will cover every phase of Christian Endeavor work at home and in the mission fields.

CURRENT THOUGHT.

Like all sinners, I'm fond of Jesus Christ, but I never make an effort to do what he tells me to do. Somehow this world has slipped out of his control, and yet, if it knew, it would find in him a quite happy and easy way of living.—H. W. Massingham.

Essentially Protestantism is not a theological system: it is a spirit, the spirit of reverent and courageous challenge of whatever stands in the way of faith. Froude was substantially right when he said that "the work of the Reformation was done when speculative opinion was declared free." —Dr. John E. McFadyen.

It is because I believe in the sanctity of the nation and the magnificence of patriotism, it is because I believe youth can best serve the nation and mankind by living for duty rather than by dying for it, that I reaffirm my belief that the Christian church, if it be so minded, can, in the name of Christ, **rule out war and rule in peace** within a generation. I may be a fool, but if so I am God's fool!—Bishop Brent.

If you were leading a thirsty caravan in the desert, and the usual wells had dried up, you might announce to the travelers that henceforth when you used the word "water" you meant "sand." If a little later you ran ahead excitedly and shouted "Water! Water!" they would rush after you expecting a drink.

This is the method of the liberal theologian.—Bertrand Russell.

Prohibition saved the working classes. They aren't drinking any more like they used to. It's the politicians that drink, and the smart folks, and the fashionables. That's what makes all the roar about prohibition.

The rising generation? Never was such looseness! We all know what they're up to. Why? The automobile. We've put the red light district on wheels.

Repeal the prohibition law? You could as soon dam Niagara with toothpicks! I've found out the will of the people in my travels, and I know they don't want it repealed.—Billy Sunday.

Does God predict **a great revival** to take place before the rapture? No one denies that the church is in great need of revival. A worldwide reviving of the church is a condition greatly to be desired, but as much as we would like to see it, we must let our sentiments and feelings give way to God's Word. The Word has nothing to say concerning a worldwide revival in the end of this age: on the contrary, it gives the dark forecast of apostasy. We do not say that such a revival is impossible, we do not say that there will be no spiritual awakenings in isolated localities: we do say that the Scripture says nothing of a sweeping revival for the end of this age. As much as we wish for a universal revival, we cannot go to Scripture to get warrant for such a hope. That such a revival should come and sweep over the world would be a miracle beyond question, but another thing is as marvelous to us,—it is that in the midst of demonism, criticism, rationalism, modernism, humanism, materialism, there is the survival of the church. God has kept his church, and so shall it be till the clouds open in the rapture, and the absent Head and the body are together. In the midst of the apostasy God will preserve unto himself a remnant which stands for the old Book in its entirety, that will battle for the deity of Christ, that will preach salvation by shed blood, and that will proclaim the soon-coming of the absent Lord. The apostasy is here! The stream is contaminated! In the midst of the apostasy, not a revival but survival!—"Grace and Truth."

Dr. Grenfell on "China."

Dr. Wilfred Grenfell returned from a tour around the world last spring. An opportunity was afforded him of visiting various mission stations, and his reputation had preceded him to China, where opportunities were afforded him to meet many leaders in Chinese life. His impressions are of special interest, as being those of an experienced missionary in an entirely different field.

On another page we print a letter giving some impressions of China, which he acknowledges may be superficial, in view of his brief stay in China, all too inadequate for a careful and thorough study: and yet the impressions were received in part from those who have spent many years in China and have followed closely current events in that great land.

A Lawyer in Church.

A certain young criminal lawyer was always full of quips.

A few years ago I attended the funeral of a millionaire financier,—one of those "high financiers" whose low methods he loved to turn the light on.

I arrived at the funeral a little late, and took a seat beside him, and whispered:

"How far has the service gone?"

He nodded toward the clergyman in the pulpit, whispered back tersely:

"Just opened for the defence!"—"Everybody's."

While helping a missionary in **Korea** install a telephone, a native was informed that the particular instrument they were working on had come from America.

"Oh," said the Korean, "then you can't talk Korean over it, can you?"

It is announced that **the crown princess of Japan** will give a sundial to the leper hospital of the Church of the Advent in Tokyo. The dial will bear the text:

"From the rising of the sun until the going down thereof, the Lord's name shall be praised."

The 53rd Annual Report (1924-25) of the **McAll Mission of France** (Mission Populaire Évangélique de France) reports a good year, on the whole. The total income was Frs. 906,570, or £36,262. The United States contributed $28,908, which, with an exchange profit, realized Frs. 548,317.

The African preacher's career is one round of temptation. Instead of the life of grace being easier to a preacher, it is more arduous. Often, like Thomas Boston, one has preached for one's own profit or comfort. Often, like John Bunyan, one has gone in chains to preach to those in chains. But that temptations do divinely keep a ministry alive is a fact of real experience. —Dan Crawford.

"When one has been in a **Chinese prison,"** wrote Miss Mae Chapin of Kacheck, Hainan, China, after she had visited the prison there, "one realizes what the Master meant when he said, 'I was in prison, and ye came unto me.' Nothing but the love of Christ could compel one to go to such a place as a Chinese prison. One of the prisoners said to me, 'And you are willing to come to see such as we are, and in such a place as this! We surely ought to follow a gospel that has so much love in it.'"

The Punjab church has just sent out its first foreign missionary. Mr. Hakim Din, who for several years has been headmaster at the Christian Training Institute, has gone away with his family for service in the Fiji Islands. Most of the Fijians are Christians, but there are 60,000 to 75,000 Indians there as emigrants. This is about as many as there are of the Fijians, and it is among these that Mr. Hakim Din has gone to work.

Along with this service he is exploring the possibilities of emigration to the islands from among the poor downtrodden serfs of the Punjab.

The missionary members of the Methodist forces in Japan absolutely refuse to believe that God or the church in America calls for curtailment of their evangelistic and educational work. We are told also that in order to help make possible the tiding over of this crisis in the Methodist boards, several if not all of the Methodist missionaries in that field are having their home furloughs postponed a year, a real sacrifice to the work.

We are further told that the "Japan Times," after mentioning this fact, goes on to say:

"In the light of intimations within the past months of the probability of cutting down work of other organizations engaged in mission work in Japan, this firm stand of the Methodist mission and church that its work in Japan will be kept up, is significant."

The leading nationalist newspaper of India is **"The Hindu."** Its attitude is hostile to foreigners and to missionaries, yet it recently published on its editorial page this statement:

"Christ said, 'Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' He stood on Asia's soil as he spoke these wondrous words. His message is the same today, and he is speaking to India's soul. The peace, the rest of heart that India so yearns after, may be had from Christ. He still says, 'My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' Do you know the peace that passeth understanding?"

In an endeavor to have one little boy at **Sheldon Jackson School, Sitka, Alaska,** take pride in making his bed neatly, the teacher asked where he slept when in his own home.

"Oh, I always slept in the woodshed!" he replied.

This typifies the amount of readjustment necessary on the part of the pupils when they first come to the school, and the change

in their mode of existence. They are quick to catch and apply new ideas, however.

The teacher had just read the parable of the Vine and the branches, and explained that if we are really living a Christian life we are branches.

Little John looked down on smaller Matthew and observed:

"Then Matthew is a little twig!"

In the hills of eastern Washington a missionary came upon a community not marked on any map. In almost twenty years no ordained minister had held services there. The missionary stopped. Later there was a week of meetings.

Almost at once repairs began in hearts and homes. Loose boards were nailed fast, gates rehung on hinges, broken window panes replaced; and the man who had recently ordered his third wife away reconciled his difficulties and became the Sunday school superintendent.

"Even my cattle," he said, "knew that a glorious change had come over me."

The "Chinese Recorder" has been investigating the **articles in Chinese newspapers attacking Christianity** in connection with the recent anti-foreign movement. It classifies the articles, up to the end of February, 1925, with reference to the aspects of our religion to which the writers object. The showing is instructive, particularly the fact that only one article has appeared against Jesus Christ, and only one against the Bible. The tabulation is as follows:

Mission school	36 articles against
The Church	5 articles against
Christianity in general	34 articles against
Preachers	5 articles against
Christians	11 articles against
Christian literature	2 articles against
Bible	1 article against
Jesus Christ	1 article against

The movement among Christian converts in foreign fields to take more responsibility in organized work has borne definite results of a striking character in the **Swatow (South China)** field of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. The native Baptists there, numbering some 5000, have cut loose from the Baptist board and formed an autonomous council. In their communication to the board, which is couched in the friendliest terms and no doubt prepared with the knowledge of the missionaries, they recognize with gratitude all that the missionaries have done in the past 60 to 70 years. Recent movements in China, they say,—the antichristian movement of 1922, the indignation over the recent Shanghai massacres, etc.,—have led them to take this step in order to escape the imputation of being a foreign, not an indigenous church.

The council is to consist of 80 persons, of whom 15 are to be missionaries. They request for the present a continuance of foreign financial aid, but without foreign control. "We are very much ashamed that we are unable to provide for the missionaries."

The American Baptist board rejoices that the ultimate purpose of missions has been reached, and is going to stand by while the new council struggles with the problems and burdens it has assumed.

Establishment of a **Yale school in Labrador,** at the Grenfell Mission, has been announced. The institution, founded by gifts of Yale students, represents enthusiastic indorsement of Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell's pioneer work in the North.

Yale's new school stands at Northwest River, the gateway to the interior of Labrador. Seventy families now residing at that point have no other means of educating their children. For years Yale men have passed their summers assisting Dr. Grenfell in his work among the children and young men, all of whom, above the age of sixteen, earn their livelihood by trapping.

Three undergraduates were attached to the Grenfell mission last summer. Two of them, Lewis V. Frissell of New York City and James E. Hollier of Pikeville, Ky., both juniors, discovered a river terminating in a 160-foot falls. They named this the Yale Falls. A motor boat cruising about the waters of Northwest River, the gift of university men, bears the name of "The Yale."

"Yale is giving us our chance," Dr. Grenfell wrote. In a letter to the Yale Grenfell Association he said: "The establishment of a school at Northwest River is the result of a long history of volunteer service from Yale. A whole list of Yale names comes to my mind as I write, men who have done yeoman service."

Last Thanksgiving, with another of our faculty I took a three days' trip into the country. Our objective was a forest plantation about two hours' walk beyond one of our Presbyterian stations thirty miles southeast of Nanking.

We were coming back from our visit at the plantation, had entered the city gate, and as I was walking along the paved but dirty street, crowded with all sorts and conditions of people, my attention was suddenly arrested by **the face of a woman,** standing behind a counter in a store opening upon the street. She seemed a thing apart, and I shall not attempt to describe the peace, happiness, character and spirituality that were so immediately evident. My only explanation, coming as it did immediately, was that the woman must be a Christian.

As I got closer and fewer people intervened, I saw that she was reading a New Testament, that she was a Christian.

I can still see her standing behind the counter. I shall never forget the face. Miracles still happen. Certainly nothing less than Christ's miraculous influence could have brought about the change I saw. And as I passed through the crowd, up the street to the chapel and out through the opposite gate, homeward bound through a cheerless countryside, I knew as I had never known before that only with God are all things possible. The Chinese Christian church is on the march.—John H. Reisner, Nanking, China.

Mohammedanism is deeply stirred, though much that is going on is unseen. There are powerful undercurrents, the presence of which is not always realized.

Once while riding through a village in Upper Egypt I met a young man who greeted me very politely. I took him to be a Christian, and asked him if the Christians had a religious meeting in town.

"None whatever," he replied.

After a short talk I asked if he could not do something to help the Christians there. He replied that it was difficult, for he himself was a Moslem. I said I was mistaken in asking him, but at once he replied:

"Not much, for I think a great deal of Christianity, and often go to a little church in the next town."

That afternoon he helped to arrange for meetings in his own town, and also in a neighboring one. Seeing he had an unusual knowledge of the Bible and of Christianity for a Moslem, I asked how this happened. He said that when his father was in the Azhar University he had a Bible, and often read it to him, explaining its meaning.

In another place, when introduced to a Moslem sheikh I was told that he was an evangelical Moslem. He, too, knew much about the Bible. The few brethren in the church there were enthusiastic over him. Once he came to their prayer-meeting, took a verse from the Bible, and gave a religious talk on it. No wonder the Christians were somewhat amazed!

This reminds me that there is a Moslem sect in Upper Egypt who are called "The Jesus Mohammedans," on account of the prominent place given to Christ.—Rev. W. H. Reed.

My hobby out here is the Sunday school work, which gives me a good chance to get away from the sick on Sundays and have a part in the evangelistic work direct.

This is going forward at a steady growth, and now we have work in 48 Sunday schools in and about the city, with a teaching force of about 200. The total attendance for all these places on Sunday averages about 2900, though on good days it runs up to 3200 occasionally. On a government map there are shown 104 villages about Kwangju, so there are still opportunities for increasing and reaching out. One great problem is to secure teachers. We are now trying to train up a good number, so on Friday nights we have a normal, where the teachers are divided into three classes, and in this way graded.

Most all the ladies and some of the men of the station take an active part in advancing this work. There are five highways running out of the city, and each of these has a person who has direct supervision over the Sunday schools along it. At about seven of these places we have started day schools, which bring the quickest results. Very soon these villages become feeders to other station schools, hospitals and churches, and the little ones are being gathered in fast.

I feel that we have no greater opportunity for the salvation of souls than in this work.

Coming home one day we picked up one

A gathering of homesteaders at a schoolhouse in Central Montana, about 75 miles from the railroad. They can be reached and helped by gospel literature.

of these little boys who had been to Sunday school. He talked freely and sang songs to us as we came along. He said:

"I'm a Jesus man, and I go to Sunday school every Sunday. My parents do not believe, but I tell them that they must believe, or they can not get to heaven."

So I feel that the quickest way to the hearts of these older heathens, who are so set in their beliefs, is through their own children, who are so easy to bring to Christ.—Dr. R. M. Wilson, Kwangju, Korea.

An African's Prayer.

"O thou Great Chief, light a candle within our hearts, that we may see what is therein, and sweep the rubbish from thy dwelling place!"

It was the prayer of an African school girl in a little school on the forest uplands of Northern Rhodesia.

It was Christmas Eve in our school compound, and the girls gave a representation of the Nativity in symbolic scenes. The shining light of moon and stars lit up the wondering faces of a silent throng of people gathered there. From a little round thatched shelter in the center the light blazed forth, and around the quiet figure of an African girl holding a little peaceful babe there knelt those who had come out of the shadows from north and south, east and west. There were shepherds and kings, little eager children and seeking women,—the whole hungering, wistful world of Africa was represented there.

When the last sweet notes of their song died away, they rose to go, but not empty-handed,—each one carried with her a little lighted candle. The darkness now was broken by innumerable gleams of light. The soft yellow glow made beautiful the rapt faces of children as they guarded the flickering flame in steady hands. For each child the way was clear, stones in the path were revealed, she could walk without fear and stumbling.

Perhaps it was that picture before the child's eyes that called forth that prayer of hers: it is the picture in our hearts as we live our life among the girls in our school village.—Mabel Shaw.

Gen. Feng Opens a School of Theology.

Of interest to all missionaries is the announcement that General Feng Yuhsiang, known as China's Christian general, has opened a school of theology, and has appealed to all Christian pastors to recommend men who will meet the requirements of the school. They are as follows:

1. Purpose. To establish an indigenous church in China; to put into practice Christian sacrifice; to inculcate the earnest and frugal principles of our ancients; to nourish character, and to further the gospel in the Northwestern army.

2. Curriculum. The Bible, theology, church history, homiletics, the Chinese classics, the philosophy of Lau-ts Muh-ts, Chinese history, history of Chinese ethics, English, psychology, general military knowledge, nursing, a selected handicraft, Chinese boxing.

3. Fees. Food, lodging and uniforms will be supplied by the school. Food and clothing, however, will be simple and discipline strict, as befits men training for religious work in the army.

4. Length of course. Half a year will be given to a preparatory course, and half a year to the regular course. Those completing these will receive a diploma.

5. Requirements for admission. Candidates for the school must be baptized, and acquainted with the elements of the Bible. Their character must be guaranteed by one pastor and one layman. They must be middle school graduates, of good health, over 19 years of age, able to bear hardship. The lack of any of these will disqualify.

6. Graduates will be appointed immediately as army preachers on salary. Men who make a good record for two years will be appointed assistant pastors, and after two years more, full pastors.

The school was opened at Kalgan last November. This prospectus tends to show how Christianity is taking hold in the influential quarters of China.

LEARNING TO PRAY IN INDIA.

Fire flames and flares, and in India prayer is often ejaculatory. "Swami Narayana!" "Swami Krishna!" easily becomes "Swami Jesus!"

These phrases are often used to protect the speaker from the evil eye or to keep off evil spirits. Many in mass movement areas have at first no idea of prayer except as a charm. We have to guard against the Lord's Prayer being gabbled off like a mantra, without being understood. Also against the phrase, "We ask all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," being repeated in the same way.

We begin in our meetings for women in Christian villages (and we try to have a weekly one in each village,) to teach simple prayers to the mothers, that they in turn may teach them to their children. When they begin to take part in prayer meetings, the prayers at first are brief and to the point. Generally they ask some boon, such as "My child is sick: please make him better!" or "My husband went to work very angry this morning: please make him better tempered when he returns!" They soon learn to pray for greater things,—the kingdom of God and their neighbors' needs. We try to teach them that prayer is like conversation. Where love is, it is natural. When anger, jealousy, sin or pride comes, just as it leads to sullenness in the home, it comes between us and God, and we do not want to pray.

Let me give two examples of praying women who had learnt much in the school of prayer. It is strange that both of these women had the same name, Gold. They were also of the same caste.

The husband of Gold No. 1 was in government service. She had had a little education. After her marriage a Zenana teacher helped her to go on with her studies. Then she learnt of Jesus, and very soon decided to follow him. She began to pray for her husband and children, and won them all for Christ. The day came when the boys grew up and became really brilliant scholars. They began to read about Hinduism and Mohammedanism, and to question as to which was the best form of religion. I asked Gold what she did at this time, and she replied:

"I could not follow them and look after them as I did when they were children, so I took them to the Lord Jesus and said, 'Thou gavest me these children to nurse for thee, Lord, and I have done as thou toldest me! Now they are beyond me, and I bring them back to thee and leave them in thy keeping.'"

You will not be surprised to hear that one, at least, has become a power in the Indian Christian church, and all are out definitely on Christ's side.

Gold No. 2 decided to follow Jesus when a child in a mission school. For this reason her people took her away from school. She was married young, was in a good position, had several children, and though she never forgot, her faith grew dim. Then trouble came, and she began to pray. Twenty years after her decision at school she and her husband and daughter were baptized.

An Indian prayer meeting amongst Christians of some years' standing has no pauses. Their desires find easy expression. There is not the same reserve as there is with us.

I remember hearing of a Biblewoman praying for her superintendent that she might have the blessing of a good temper, and she said, "You know, Lord, she has an awful temper, but her heart is all right!" Fortunately, perhaps, the superintendent, who was present, was deaf.

They learn to pray from example. We

hold summer schools for women in our district. Two delegates from each church come in, and they live with the workers, women from other villages, and the missionary for some four or five days. Of course, where women are in India there are their children with them. On the last day of the school I have often heard the women testify to the help it has been to them to see how one of the Biblewomen trained her little adopted son, and they went back to their villages determined to do the same with there own children.

Sometimes we have had an all-day prayer meeting, but only in times of crises,—when a girl was kidnapped, when a mission was to be held, when funds were needed urgently. They have been very sacred times, but should not be held often.

There is one thing they have brought over from Hinduism, and that is the making of vows. Generally they are promises of thank-offerings for recovery from sickness, for answered prayer, for grants of land from government, for successful marriage arrangements, for passing some examination; and as a rule they are faithfully paid.—Miss M. P. Stringfellow, Kamalapuram, South India.

MPANZU'S PLEA AND PROPHECY.

Rev. John E. Geil.

Mpanzu is an aged and noted African chief who at one time was rich in wives, warriors, slaves and henchmen. He bartered freely in human beings, giving them in exchange for rum, guns, cloth, knives, etc. For a number of years he resisted successfully the encroachments of the Leopold régime. Finally the authorities wisely decided that instead of trying to capture and kill him they would try and win his friendship and secure his coöperation. In this they succeeded, but Mpanzu, despite limitations put upon him, continued to be the most influential and powerful chief of his section of country, which is on the north side of the Congo River in the Lukunga section of the Banza Manteke field. He never became a Christian, but for a number of years has shown himself friendly to the mission and its work.

It was proposed that a series of special meetings should be held in Mpanzu's village. Mpanzu and his people took to the proposal, and put their village in order, prepared a place of meeting by roofing over a large space in the village with palm branches, provided sleeping accommodations and a generous supply of food for visiting guests from Banza Manteke, Mpalabala, and other sections.

The meetings were full of spiritual power and blessing, being characterized by good attendance, good interest, good spirit, good thank offerings, and a goodly number of baptisms. On Sunday evening after a full and busy day the improvised place of meeting was filled to overflowing, and many were standing and sitting about on the outside. Mpanzu was there, seated in a chair immediately in front of the speaker's table. Like the others, he listened quietly and attentively to the message of the evening, which I fear was rather prolonged.

The closing prayer was about to be offered when a man arose, and addressing the missionary in charge said:

"Father Mpanzu has something he wants to say to you."

An opportunity was given Mpanzu to speak, and the old gray-headed chief with his blankets draped about his tall stately form arose and stood in the dim light of the lanterns and under the canopy of palm branches. Removing from his head the

When Father Prays.

When father prays he doesn't use
The words the preacher does;
There's different things for different days,—
But mostly it's for us.

When father prays the house is still,
His voice is slow and deep.
We shut our eyes, the clock ticks loud,
So quiet we must keep.

He prays that we may be good boys,
And later on good men;
And then we squirm, and think we won't
Have any quarrels again.

You'd never think, to look at Dad,
He once had tempers, too.
I guess if father needs to pray,
We youngsters surely do.

Sometimes the prayer gets very long
And hard to understand,
And then I wiggle up quite close,
And let him hold my hand.

I can't remember all of it,—
I'm little yet, you see;
But one thing I cannot forget,—
My father prays for me!

—R. W. T.

small woven cap which he had worn during the service, and which was a mark of his kingly authority, he addressed himself in his fierce coarse manner to the missionary directly in front of him, while the natives in the darkness kept silence and listened with rapt attention. The conversation which took place is in substance as follows.

Mpanzu. "My request to you this night is made in behalf of all the district chiefs of this section of country. We have many villages and many people. Banza Manteke is four days away from us, and we can't get the help which we need and want from there. We have conferred together and agreed together to ask you to put a mission station and missionaries right here in our midst. Will you do it?"

Missionary. "It is hard for me to believe that the chiefs who have stubbornly and persistently refused to have anything to do with the mission are now uniting with you in this request. However, I am glad to have the request, and am sorry to have to say that it cannot be granted at this time. For lack of missionaries and money we have had to discontinue the work of the Lukunga and Mpalabala stations, and as yet we have not been able to staff and equip properly the Banza Manteke station. Since these things are so, the Christian people in my country would not undertake the establishing of a new station and work."

Mpanzu. "If you tell them that chief Mpanzu has made this request, and that the section of country which they have long been trying to enter is now open to them, will they not hear and heed? Have they ceased to care for us, that they will no longer listen to us when we cry unto them in our distress and need?"

Missionary. "They have not ceased to care for you or your people, and they will be glad to have this request, and would like to grant it. More demands are being made upon them since the war than they can possibly meet, and besides it is not for the most part the rich people who are doing this work, but the poor people who have the love and spirit of Jesus Christ in their hearts and lives."

Mpanzu. "I want you to tell them. I also want you to tell us what we are now to do. We have given up the witch doctors and the fetishes, and are not going to have anything more to do with them. All our lives we have looked to these and these alone for help in every time of need. We cannot look to them any more. To whom or to what are we now to look for help?"

Missionary. "You will have to look to your kind loving heavenly Father."

Mpanzu. "We do not know him. Our people do not know him. Many of them have never had any teachers or any chance to know him. How can we look to him when we do not know him?"

Missionary. "You have some teachers and some people who know him, and those of you who have teachers ought to know him."

Mpanzu. "We are glad for these teachers which we have, but they do not know him as you white people know him, and are unable to help others to know him well."

Missionary. "What you say is true, and we are going to do our utmost to provide you with good teachers. We are going to have a good big mission station at Banza Manteke with missionaries, buildings, equipment, good schools, and a hospital with doctors and nurses. You will have to send the brightest and best of your boys and girls to this station, and we will carefully teach and train them, and they will come back to you to be your teachers, preachers, doctors and nurses."

Mpanzu. "What you say is not sufficient, but it is good. How long will it be before we can have this help?"

Missionary. "Mpanzu, I do not know, but I hope it will not be very long."

Mpanzu. "We can never see it. It will not be in my day, or in the day of these chiefs, or in the day of our people."

With these words Mpanzu sat down, and his plea and prophecy were ended. After the closing prayer Mpanzu and his people went groping in the darkness to their dark and cheerless hovels. Will the words of his prophecy be fulfilled?—"Congo News Letter."

Nancy was saying her prayers. "And please," she petitioned, "make Boston the capital of Vermont."

"Why, Nancy!" exclaimed her shocked mother. "What in the world made you say that?"

"I made it that on my examination papers today, and I want to be right."

PRAY, ALWAYS PRAY!

Rev. F. B. Meyer, D. D.

Colossians 1. 3, 9; 2. 1; 4. 2, 12, 13.

The apostle Paul LABORED in prayer: that is, his prayers cost him something. He, with Timothy, Epaphras, and perhaps two or three more, were perpetually engaged in pleading with God for their friends far away in the heart of Asia Minor, and by this Colossian letter they request that from that church also prayer might daily ascend to God that amid the great perplexities and difficulties of Rome they might be able to speak the unsearchable riches of Christ. And who shall say how much of the success of the epistles that were then indited, and of the sufferings which were then borne in Cæsar's house for Christ, were due to the prayers that were being offered in Ephesus and Colosse, and elsewhere!

How numerous are the references St. Paul makes to his daily prayers, and what a prayer-book he must have had! He must surely have kept a list of subjects, of people, and of churches, to pray for. We can imagine him constantly making a business of prayer,—the room being clear, the manuscript being left, the talk and conversation with inquiring friends being relinquished, and St. Paul closing the door to all in order that he might labor and strive in prayer, especially for many whom he loved. For instance, he says to the Romans, "Unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers." And again, to the Ephesians, "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers," "I bow my knees unto the Father." Then to the Thessalonians, "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers," and again to the Thessalonians, "We are bound to give thanks to God always for you." And to Timothy, "Unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications."

How much of St. Paul's energy went upwards! There was the constant going forth of his influence around, there was the daily striking deep the roots into the knowledge and love of God, but there was the constant rising up of his energy towards God in prayer, and it is to this, no doubt, that so much of his marvelous power in the world must be traced.

The benefit of prayer apparently falls under three main divisions of blessing, which, as we advance in thought, become ever more momentous:

First, the reflex influence of prayer; secondly, the communion and fellowship that a soul has with God in prayer; and thirdly, the positive results which accrue from intercessory prayer.

First, there is the reflex benefit of prayer. We are told of our Lord, at the very climax of his life,—the Transfiguration, to which all his life before pointed and from which all his subsequent career dated,—that as he was praying the fashion of his countenance was altered. The Transfiguration glow came upon his face as it was upturned in prayer; and surely the face of man can never be turned to the source of uncreated light without catching some of its glow. As was the case with Moses, so it is always.

I remember quite well when I was a child, and James Sherman and Samuel Martin were accustomed to be guests in my father's house, how often he would say, when they had left, that there was a light upon their faces as though they had just come from the presence chamber of God.

This is also characteristic of all men who pray. The poet says:

> Her eyes were homes of silent prayer,

as though the light of prayer lingered in the eye long after it was over as an act.

It is recorded of a young artist, studying in Rome and beginning to yield to dissolute habits, that his mother became deeply exercised about him, though without any certain information, and gave much time to prayer. Afterwards, when visiting Rome with her daughter, the young man was arrested with the supernatural beauty which had passed into her expression, and said to his sister:

"What has mother been doing lately?"

"Why do you ask?" was the reply.

"Oh," he said, "her face is so beautiful!"

And the sister said: "Perhaps it is be-

cause she has been praying so much for you lately."

A man cannot live much with God and not show the effect of the divine presence chamber. To have looked into the face of the great King, and to have enjoyed the privilege of spending some ten or twenty minutes at his feet, must weave into the whole fabric of life some golden threads that shall glisten even amid the dulling and tarnishing influence of the world. Therefore, thus I command all to pray, because of the reflex benefit produced by the contact between the soul and God, leaving always an indefinable beauty upon the face and life.

Secondly, there is the communion that prayer brings.

Some time ago a great preacher said that one Friday he heard a tap at his door by a baby hand, and presently a little face peeped in.

The father said: "What do you come for, my child? Do you want anything?"

The little fellow cuddled up to him and said: "No, father, I only wanted to be with you!"

And what is true of the little nestlings and nurslings of our home, in their yearning for love and fellowship, for the interchange of thought and embrace, is also characteristic of every true heart. We should pray that we may have an opportunity of exchanging thoughts with God. It is a mistake to always look on prayer as a means of obtaining things from God. A man would grieve if his child never sought his society except to obtain things from him, and surely God is grieved by his children rushing into his presence to hurry out a stream of requests for themselves and those dear to them, and then hastening back to their busy life without attempting to interchange tender thoughts and loving looks.

Let us remember that the Holy of Holies of the Jew probably suggested to our Lord the conception of the closet of the church! The Holy of Holies was just a closed place. It had neither window nor door, and a curtain veiled the entrance: but in that closed and inner place the soul of the priest not only pleaded for Israel, but received the impressions of the divine will by the changing light and shade that passed over the Shekinah stone. Thus, when Jesus Christ would speak to us of prayer, he said, "Enter into the inner chamber!": let every soul have its Holy of Holies, in which it shall stand before God, not only speaking to God, but waiting until God shall speak to it.

But how blessed it is that we can find that closet anywhere, for the heart may itself be a closed place! We must needs live amid the rush of the world, which will force its way in upon us, yet the heart may become a closet, and there, closed in from all besides, we may not only ask from God, but listen for God to speak to us things which otherwise we would miss.

It is probable that every one of us is the center of voices from the unseen and eternal world, to which we are not sensitive, but which, if they had visited any of the saints of Holy Scripture, would have been as wonderful as those placed on record. The difference between them and us does not exist in the favoritism which made them the repository of secrets which are veiled from us, but that they knew when God spake, and understood the inarticulate speech of heaven. How often the telephone bell, indicative that a message waits, rings in the office when the clerk is gone! How often the incessant movement of the needle has pointed out messages of life and death, messages, perhaps, which concerned us closely, but we have stood unmoved because unknowing, and unknowing because unacquainted with this special means of communicating thought. Ah, soul, it would well repay thee to learn, by quiet waiting before God, the code of his signals, the syllables of his speech!

Thirdly, the positive results which accrue from intercessory prayer.

This is specially brought out in these words which we have been considering in this epistle. What a stress the apostle laid on prayer! Here he was in Rome, a prisoner, unable to enter into the busy life of the world, and yet probably he was moving the very springs of its life by his prayer, and affecting the religious life of mankind to an extent which he little dreamt.

As in Bible times, with Moses, Samuel, David and Paul, so it has been along the path of the history of the church. Those on whose shoulders have rested the interests

of the kingdom have been men and women of prayer.

Jonathan Edwards, the profound theologian, was accustomed to pray three times a day, whether at home or traveling.

Adoniram Judson of Burmah, after reading a letter that announced an answer to one of his special petitions, turned to his devoted wife, who followed him from prison to prison, and said: "Wife, this almost frightens me! I have never prayed long and earnestly in all my life that God failed to give me a wonderful answer."

Time spent in prayer is well spent; effort put into intercession exerts a real effect on the world of men. The biography of Adolph Saphir contains a notable example of how much we may affect the lives of others by our prayer. It is recorded of the Archduchess of Hungary that in the deep embrasure of a palace window, which commanded the city of Pesth, she was accustomed, day by day, to pour out her supplications to God, looking down on the scene below,—the city, with its 100,000 inhabitants, and the vast Hungarian plains stretching away behind it in the distance. For about the space of seven years she had been praying to God for the arrival of someone who would carry the gospel to the people around. Sometimes her desire became so intense that stretching out her arms towards heaven she prayed almost in an agony of spirit that God would send at least one messenger of the cross to Hungary. In answer to this prayer Dr. Keith was brought into that town, was nursed by her to health, began to preach, and led the Saphirs amongst others to Christ.

Charles G. Finney tells in his autobiography of a cripple, always upon his bed, who used to note in his diary that on such a day he had a great impression to pray for some distant parts of the mission field, and each place very definitely: and it was discovered by a comparison instituted after his death that revivals, in the places prayed for, were simultaneous with his intercessions.

When Hudson Taylor was 15 years old he was still unconverted, and his mother said: "This afternoon all other duties will be set aside. One thing only will I do,—I will pray for my boy's conversion." God, who prompted the prayer, answered it, and the next 58 years of magnificent service were the result.

When George Müller of Bristol was asked if he had received in his marvelous prayer-life all he had asked for, he replied: "No, there are two men, close friends, for whose conversions I have prayed for more than 60 years." He died without seeing the answer, but when Dr. Pierson stated the fact from a Bristol pulpit, a lady came up to him after the service and said, "Yes, that is true. One of those men was my uncle, but he was converted in this church a short time since."

Mr. Spurgeon testified that when he opened his eyes at the conclusion of his public prayer he was sometimes startled and embarrassed to find that he was in the presence of his congregation. He had been so near to God, talking to him as friend with friend, that he forgot all else.

Dr. Andrew Bonar made it a practice to save a few minutes out of every hour for prayerful communion with God. Is it a wonder that when he was 80 years of age a great congregation still hung upon his lips?

When Robert Murray McCheyne was in Palestine for his health, he was too weak to travel, too weak to write, or even talk. He spent this time in prayer for W. C. Burns, who was taking his place in Dundee, for a revival. The answer came, and to this day Scotland bears the marks of that great awakening.

Oh, let us pray more! Let us wait before God till the Holy Spirit has time to rise in our heart, like a hot geyser spring, fresh from the heart of God leading us to pray for things he longs to give, but awaits our request! Prayer is the raw material of God's answers. Little prayer, little blessing! Much prayer, much blessing! No prayer, no blessing!

Brethren and sisters, let us pray!

Rev. C. R. Callender, Yuankiang, Yunnan, China, writes:

"Dear Bro. Gardner: Just a word of appreciation of your Bible Notes for Daily Devotions. They are very helpful to me here on the frontier. At present no white person within days of travel. The RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK is a welcome abiding friend, and your Bible selections and notes are among the most helpful parts."

NEW WINE AND NEW BOTTLES:

A NEW YEAR MEDITATION.

Rev. John A. Hutton, D. D.

Speaking for myself, there is nothing which makes me so sure of God as the fact that impulses reach us, moments come to us, when our heart leaps, and were it not that we are held back by custom, or by a foolish respect for our own previously poor career, we should do something notable and extravagant towards the salvation of our souls. When this "glory of the Lord"—as an apostle called it,—"is risen upon us," when this joy with a kind of excess for fury in it sweeps over us, we feel that it was not we who brought it into being. It came upon us, it descended upon us, it entered into us, with something of the same miraculous manner as did the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

Sometimes, of course, we can say what it was that led up to our experience of extraordinary joy. We had had a piece of good news, or we had escaped some danger, or we had definitely recovered from an illness. But any one of these things or all of them together could never have created our exuberance, or could have given it its peculiar quality of gratitude and the sense of God. No: at the most, those things—the good news, the escape from danger, the recovery from an illness,—were only the occasion of the spiritual miracle. They were not the cause of it: they only threw open an everlasting door, admitting God.

Now, I take it that during these opening days of a New Year we have all of us had in some measure an experience of this new joy, and that we are all of us still more or less within the glow of it. We are in danger of losing something—which we must not lose,—if the New Year produces no stir within our spirits, no outgoing of gratitude, no purpose of amendment. That man is dead for whom things have lost significance. The New Year is something more than a date: it is a spiritual occasion and event. In thousands of humble homes the last days of the old year were occupied in removing dust and defilement which had gathered during all the days, so that they might meet the New Year with a new countenance. That, I say, was something more than cleanliness: it was godliness. It was the work of superstition, if you like, but it was one of those superstitions which defend and express an instinct of the soul, one of those superstitions which you must not strike at for fear you strike at God himself.

Tides of the Spirit.

It is a great part of the art of life to know how to take advantage of those tides of the spirit. Much of every life is regular and tame. We simply go on, not reluctantly, not unhappily, but without any strong or tumultuous feeling. But days or hours do come, I repeat, when the wind strikes our sails, when something melts or kindles within us, when our duties are a delight to us, and we are ready to commit ourselves to high and unusual purposes. Now these tides of the spirit offer themselves in order that we may launch out upon them. Those holy impulses move within us in order that we may act upon them. An emotion—even the holiest,—by itself is nothing. It is an unfinished thing. An emotion—even the holiest,—is only an opportunity, a good opportunity for doing something, that is to say, for becoming something. An emotion comes to us in order that we may set out upon it. It is the steam by which the whole interior business of our life gets advanced. Emotion is to our personal life what the band is to a regiment on the march; it is the thing which makes us forget that we are marching. "New wine," said Jesus, "must be put into new bottles." By "new wine" I mean for the moment that entire change and joy which, however obscurely, we are aware of as we cross the threshold of a new tract of time. I mean that new wealth of opportunities, of clean pages, of unsullied days, which are being offered to us. I mean the invitation to ourselves to be different, to be better, to be done with old bad things, and to take up new good things, which I believe everyone in his heart feels at such a time.

In saying that "new wine must be put into new bottles," our Lord means, of

course, that we must be prepared to give those high feelings which visit us proper entertainment. If there is anything in our ways of living which looks wrong in the light of our feelings today, we must deal with it so that it shall no longer spoil our life.

Here we touch a very serious matter, and one on which we are all apt to deceive ourselves. It is possible for one to have feelings of the kind I have described and yet to do absolutely nothing with them. Indeed, it is possible for us to have feelings of an exalted and religious kind, and yet at the same time to be living in a way quite opposed to them. And far from rebuking ourselves for living in this divided and insincere way, we may even take credit to ourselves for having fine feelings at all. But feelings or impulses or fine thoughts which are having no direct influence upon our true character are of no more value than those dreams we dream, in which we seem to be doing something remarkable, when, as a matter of fact, we are in bed.

Tolstoy describes in one of his searching stories a lady weeping bitterly as she sat in her stall at the play, weeping over the fictitious sufferings of the hero while all the time her poor droshky-driver was freezing on the box outside. We all know what it is to be deeply touched by some story we have been reading, or by fine music, or by pictures, to feel tender and sore, and yet at the very moment or next moment to be able to speak sharply to some one who asks a service of us, or to become angry and rebellious as we recall some little duty to which we must now bestir ourselves. To have high feelings and to do nothing on the strength of them is simply to be indulging ourselves. We often say that to hear some music, or to read some book, did us good. But perhaps we have no right to say that any experience did us good if it failed to make us good, if it failed to influence in some real way our behavior to others, or to refine and correct our life, I mean in the region of our pursuits and the things we permit ourselves.

Let us apply all this to the position we occupy today with a New Year stretching before us!

We have all our own feelings about ourselves, and they are apt to be true and honest at such a time as this. Only let us see that we act upon them!

There is the feeling, for example, that old things are past; that we begin a new reckoning; that we are at a certain advantage in these days for all moral and spiritual purposes. This is a feeling which I am sure God permits to us all, even to those who do not see that it is only through the obedience of Christ and his continual intercession that any one of us has the joy of a new beginning.

No doubt, if we were to sit down and to consider this feeling which may have come to us—that we are at a new beginning, and that things are possible to us this week in the way of character which never occurred to us as possible before,—we should easily be able to tear it to pieces and to demonstrate to ourselves that these days are not different from any other days. Yes, but that is just what we are not to do. We are not to try to get behind those inexplicable moods of the spirit which come to us—as the wind comes,—we know not whence, we know not whither. Once more, our business with those uprisings of emotion, or moral ambition and faith, is not to get behind them, not to reduce their significance, but to act upon them, to attribute to them the holiest origin and to give them their fullest sway.

Our Lord's Teaching.

I can see very clearly that this whole matter was constantly in the mind of our Lord in his dealings with men. He seemed to recognize that, speaking generally, there were in every life days and days upon end when there is no stir, nothing enlivening, days in which one simply goes on and on. But he was firm in declaring that to every one of us as we go on through life days do come of quite a different kind. A day comes when, for any one of a thousand reasons, our heart is full to overflowing with a ready and sensitive life. Our eye has a new brightness, and in response to our newly-awakened faculties the whole world becomes a place of high messages and beautiful corroborations. It is on such days that we are to come under new vows unto God. It is on such days—that is to say, when we are able,—that we are to cast away from us things which we always

suspected were unworthy, but which we never knew until then to be quite intolerable.

I say our Lord was very firm and consistent in his teaching regarding what we ought to do on these days when our hearts for some reason are tender and awake. Two counsels in particular he gave: on one occasion he gave them both in one breath.

For one thing, he besought us, whenever we catch ourselves in any mood of tenderness and reality, when we are ready to deal with ourselves in some radical and fundamental way, to take ourselves seriously. We are to regard our condition at such a time as something that has come to us for a purpose. We are not to try to get behind it, giving it a poor or cynical explanation. We are not "to judge all nature from her feet of clay." We are not to say it is all a matter of temperament or circumstance, thereby separating God from his own world. We are not to say it is simply "good spirits" when it may be the Holy Spirit. That was one of our Lord's instructions; we are to trust those promptings to better things which come to us one by one by all manner of ways. To use his own words, "While ye have light, believe in the light!"

And the other instruction is not far from that in spirit. It is the instruction underlying the words, "New wine must be put into new bottles." He besought us, that is to say, "not to hold down the truth in unrighteousness," not to stand still while some warm emotion is knocking at the door of our will, not to do nothing. He besought us "TO WALK while we have the light" lest darkness come upon us. For if the light that is in us be darkness, if the throb of the higher will within our wills—if that be permitted to sink and die having effected nothing,—then is our darkness great indeed. It was a constant thought in our Lord's direct dealings with men that they should not trifle with their own better impulses, that they should not suppress the warm instigations of the Spirit which break in upon the monotony and usualness of our lives, that rather we should be obedient to these heavenly visions, we should "arise and shine when our light is come and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon us."

Not in so many words, indeed, but in many a grave saying to various people did our Lord declare that "for man there is but one great misfortune: to receive an idea that exerts no influence upon his active life."

VOICES OF THE GREAT CREATOR.

I. THE VOICE OF THE DESERT.

Rev. Albert D. Belden.*

To the Western mind the word "desert" suggests the burning sands of the Sahara and intolerable thirst. But as a matter of fact, under the name "desert" can be gathered many other great tracts of earth, such as the terrible ice wastes of the Poles, the luxuriously verdant steppes of Southern Russia, the wide prairies and stony wildernesses of the American continent, not to mention various wide and bleak mountain tablelands. The supreme characteristic of the desert is its desertedness,—its vast and soul-shaking solitude.

This is why all the great world religions take their rise in desert-like lands. The land of short views originates no lasting religion, it has to borrow one. The sense of God is the gift of the great spaces of the world. Thus, the great Indian religions owe their deep mysticism to the huge burning plains of that strange land, with their vast distances, their wide horizons, their sense of brooding omnipresence. Similarly, the religions that lie behind and in association with Christianity found their initial impulse and frequent renewal in the vast plain of Anatolia and the deserts of Arabia. The Bible is full of this somber yet gracious influence.

It was in the desert that Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Amos, John the Baptist, Paul, even our Lord, came to their life work. The discipline of the lonely wilderness, with the discovery of God in its depths, gave them victory over self, and therefore over the world.

* Mr. Belden is a Congregational pastor in Westcliff-on-Sea, England.

When the disciples returned tired out from their first great mission for Christ, it was to a desert place that he called them for the renewal of vision and strength.

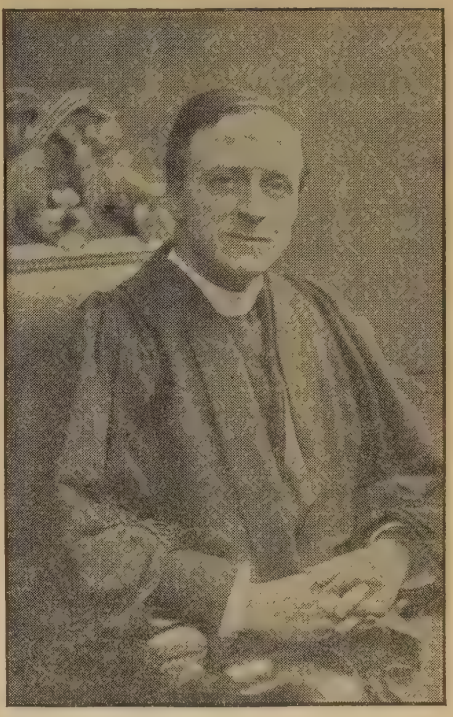
Travelers in desert regions still bear eloquent testimony, often with trembling awe, to the power of the great spaces to launch upon the human mind a presence that "disturbs with the joy of elevated thought." Sir Ernest Shackleton in his book "South" has written, "During that long and racking march of thirty-six hours over the glaciers of South Georgia, it seemed to me very often that we were not three, but four. I said nothing to my companions on the point, but afterwards Worsley said to me, 'Boss, I had a curious feeling on the march that there was another Person with us.'"

Here there is a great paradox. The call of the desert is to solitude, but the gift of the desert is society, the highest society that men can know, the fountain-head of all true human solidarity.

Everyman's Desert.

Ours is an ultra-social age, an age of clubs and groups and movements, an age of "madding crowds": and these things can become soul-destroying and meaningless if they are not sustained by a true selfhood in the individual. The city, as we shall see, is also a voice of God, but ere ever the city can be God's voice, there is a voice of the desert, of the quiet solitude of life, to be heard and answered. No true society can arise otherwise. Society is not formed by a fortuitous concourse of (human) atoms, but by the free, full fellowship of self-possessed and therefore self-giving personalities. The first step towards that self-possession, that true self-love which Jesus endorsed so emphatically, is to realize the utter separateness of one's being. There is an inner loneliness into which we all retreat at times, often to find it desert indeed. The coldness of the world, some crushing disappointment, the threat of death, the mere contemplation of our selfhood, these may suffice to discover to us our desert.

But this experience is full of hope. It is good sometimes to get face to face with that elusive entity, one's self. It is so easy to lose it in the crowd of men and things. We can be grateful for any experience that gives us back to ourselves. For until we are our own possession, no adequate meaning can attach to our quest for God. There is a healthy egoism without which altruism has no real significance. To this solitariness of self-possession, this girding-up of our selfhood, every desert calls, whether it be the desert of nature's fashioning or the seemingly barren waste of the soul's isolation from its kind.



Rev. Albert D. Belden.

I Was Silent, and I Heard a Voice.

In the heart of such solitariness there is to be found Another. That great modern publicist, Mr. H. G. Wells, exploring independently the desert hinterland of the human mind, has been brought to the solemn verdict, "No soul is alone in itself." When, moreover, the sense of inner vastness has coincided with wide horizons of outward vision, the verdict has been indeed irresistible. The soul has then felt itself besieged by almighty God, and has cried with a new note of poignant reality, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me."

An ex-officer of the Great War, to whom this idea was mentioned recently, exclaimed excitedly:

"My word! That's true! I remember feeling just like that more than once when watching in No-Man's Land."

To the lonely watcher, beset though he was by human hates, just because he was caught between the illimitable inward and the illimitable outward, had come the sense of the being who is from everlasting to everlasting,—God! No-Man's Land is ever God's land. Solitude, if it be deep enough, profound enough, yields the sense of God. Yet how gently the desert-companion approaches, and how scrupulously he respects the selfhood he has created! In the solitude he grows upon your vision and understanding, not so much overcoming your selfhood as endowing it, baptizing it, with his own spirit. It is gift for gift. Having drawn you to a fuller self-possession in the all-besieging quiet, gently but inexorably he leads you into a free companionship, all the more utterly captivating because of the perfect reverence of its appeal. At any moment you can draw back and break the relationship, yet the pressure is unmistakably there. Is it any wonder, then, that out of the desert there emerges that fixed belief in God which is the very soul of society, and which alone is strong enough to bind men together in indissoluble union and in unfailing helpfulness?

Do we know this experience well enough? Have we used aright the lonely spaces of life, the desert hours and days? Only in the discovery of this high companionship is there promise of the desert's conquest, a conquest whereby the wilderness shall be made to rejoice and blossom as the rose, and the soul enabled to declare with truth,

"In the desert ways I sing,
Spring, O Well, for ever spring!"

(Next month: The Voice of the Mountain.)

HOW TO FIND REALITY IN YOUR MORNING DEVOTIONS—II.*

Rev. Donald Carruthers.

Prayer is the breath of the Christian, the cable from the power house, the channel from the reservoir, the warmth from the sun. Prayer is a loving Father's gift to the objects of his grace, his own children.

Suggestions as to Effective Prayer.

1. Have a definite time each morning!

The morning period before breakfast is most desirable. Day telegrams are delivered immediately, night letters are delayed until the following morning. Give God the first moments of your day! It will remove the friction from the rest of the day's duties. The psalmist wrote, "In the morning will I order my prayer unto thee, and will keep watch." It was a habit of Jesus, "a great while before it was day."

2. Have a definite place where you can be alone!

Learn to concentrate on heavenly thoughts even when surrounded by others amid real confusion! It is an art to become unmindful of others when absorbed in communion. Seek the out of doors frequently to feel the holy hush of nature newly born. Make your bedroom a gateway into his presence. Shut the door on the world and all that would distract. Closet yourself with the Lord Jesus. Let nothing on your part make such intimacy difficult.

3. Pray aloud if your thoughts are tempted to wander!

Prayer is not limited to a posture or a time or an expression of the lips. Prayer is an attitude of the heart toward God. Communion is not restricted to a single period of the day. God seeth the heart. Men of God have found audible prayer a means of making more real their fellowship with him. Jesus sometimes prayed aloud. We are richer since men heard his petitions. Adopt the practice that best satisfies your own spiritual hunger.

4. Be willing to agonize in prayer!

In the garden Jesus prayed with costly intensity. Do not trifle. You are in God's presence. Come before him with real prob-

* Northfield Young Women's Conference, 1925. Bible class, condensed.

lems, whether large or small, that demand his power. Be deadly in earnest. Insincere prayers seldom rise above our heads. Learn to throw the burden on God. It is his kingdom. He possesses all the resources. We sin when we expect too little of him. He has infinite time and infinite power at his disposal. Jacob wrestled with the angel. He dared to keep his hold. It meant life to Jacob. "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." God attaches himself to men who will ask and seek and knock. Believe in him and love him unto the end. He will give thee the desires of thy heart. God is not offended by our asking too much of him. "The more we expect of him, the less we are likely to be disappointed."

Obstacles to Fruitful Prayer.

1. Preoccupation.

Jesus urged men to be reconciled first with their brothers, then return to the altar to worship. God has all the time in the world. He waits for a chance when you can give him a respectable interview. Do your other tasks that seem so urgent, then return to God. He will still be waiting for you. Do not rob your best friend of the privilege of knowing your inmost thought afar off. A sense of being hurried will rob you of the enrichment that such prayer yields to believers.

2. Physical Unfitness.

Repeated loss of sleep makes spiritual communion difficult, if not impossible. When the mind is clouded with other things and preoccupied with the cares of the world, these choke the channel. Men must learn to buffet their bodies, to bring them into subjection so that they might be fit temples for the Spirit. Peter and the others failed Jesus in the hour they could have served him best: they simply were overcome with sleep.

3. Conscious Sin.

Continuance in any known or cultivated sin cuts the cable. Sin short-circuits the system that links a man to God. Lack of complete surrender, unwillingness to follow the light as discovered, selfishness in any form, poisoned springs of thought, all form permanent nonconductors to the spirit of Christlikeness.

4. Unsuspected Sin.

The closer one comes to the Lord Jesus the more glaring the defects that keep us from him. One must be on his guard lest he imagine that a surrendered will faces no severe temptation. Frequently when the grosser evils are driven out, smug, self-satisfied and exceedingly subtle sins escape banishment. Tiny impurities on the lens of a great telescope distort the image perceptibly. An unforgiving spirit of bitter, destructive criticism, or of hatred toward men or races makes prayer a hollow mockery. Envy and petty jealousy add their vicious malignance. A Christian cannot love and hate at the same time. He cannot serve two masters. "For one is your Master, even Christ."

Method in Prayer: Four Steps.

These steps are intended to be the only method of prayer. They do represent the route over which many have found reality through Christ. You are to adopt what seems to be most applicable to you.

Part 1. Get "tuned in."

You are the greatest obstacle to God. One must get his own spiritual instrument in harmony. A symphony orchestra generally gets in tune before attempting the difficult program. Gifted musicians with instruments in perfectly adjusted rhythm respond to the merest suggestion from their conductor. We must be as responsive to God's loving direction and desire in the symphony of our own lives.

Repeat well known passages from the Word that bring him close to you. Read the words of some hymn that makes it easier for you to think high thoughts. Softly hum a melody from some precious hymn that has frequently refreshed you.

When you feel that contact has been established, begin your prayers with thanksgiving. There is nothing too small nor too great for you to thank God for. Assure him of your gratitude and implicit love.

When you have thought of God's goodness and purity and power, you will be impelled to make your confession. Breathe out the bad air of your sins and failures. Breathe in the pure air that he alone can give. Pray earnestly that the truth may break through all barriers and find you. Prayer links a man with the infinite. Nothing must be permitted to interfere with this holy relationship.

Part 2. Daily Requests.

Pray for the day's special opportunities and perplexities. Ask his blessing on your appointments, on your period of refreshment, on the particular burdens the day is to lay upon you. You cannot weary God with your petitions, however small they may be. Jesus assures us that our Father scans the obituary column for fallen sparrows. He wants us to bring to him the little perplexities. It is so much easier to take to him the really big difficulties when once we have had enough confidence in his willingness to shed light upon the most insignificant requests. A man who prays only for himself and his own interests is yet miles from the kingdom. A Christian's prayers should begin at home and encircle the whole round earth.

Part 3. Objects for intercession.

Prayer is not limited to the requests for a single day. There is a kingdom to be brought in. Jesus bade those closest him to pray for the advance of this kingdom, "Thy kingdom come." We cannot utter this petition for the coming of the kingdom on earth unless we are willing to work for its complete realization here on earth. God entrusts to us the lever of prayer that we might have a real share in this heroic venture. "They ought always to pray, and not to faint."

Pray for the progress of the kingdom at home and abroad, the problems of your community, the peace of the world, the church of the Lord Jesus, the spread of Christ's message on the mission field, the spirit of Christ in industrial perplexities, the merging of national ideals into that of a world brotherhood, etc. Jesus prayed much for the world. He carried its burdens until they crushed him. "A disciple is not above his teacher." "No one ever fully discovers himself until he identifies himself with universal ends." The kingdom of God is the one universal end. Nothing is too insignificant to pray over if it concerns your own life, or the life of a friend, or your community, or the world at large. "God's infinite all waits for our little all."

Part 4. Individuals for whom to pray.

Jesus told Peter he had prayed for him. When once a man catches the vision of what the Lord Jesus really means, his instinctive desire is to share his discovery with another. Individual prayer makes it easier for the Lord Jesus to slip across the threshold of a human heart. Prayer makes such miracles possible.

Include among those for whom you pray those you love most in all the world. Thank God for your friends by name. Then pray that the truth may come home to those who have not found him great and good and near. One rises refreshed after having asked God's richest blessing on those for whom he has prayed. It is a further compensation to have communed with the best friend, and also with those who are closest to our hearts, together with those we long to help. "Love never asks how much must I do, but how much can I do."

(Next month: The Holy Spirit.)

A WORLD SURVEY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.*

Milton Stauffer.

I think it is not too much to say that Christian missions in areas well worked and relatively old are rapidly coming into the most difficult and perhaps most embarrassing period of their history: at the same time, perhaps the most rewarding period.

Twenty years ago the missionary stood in the center of the stage. There was a perfectly white background. The spotlight of curiosity was playing on him. He was the personification of all that Christ taught and could mean to men. Today that situation no longer exists. Instead of the missionary being in the center of the stage, he is somewhere on the side lines. Instead of a perfectly white background, you have a shifting background of everything that goes on in the Western world that is inconsistent with our Christian profession. And instead of the spotlight playing somewhere on that individual whom we have sent over to represent Christ to men, the spotlight is on that shifting background, with all its inconsistent display of our own Christian life or non-Christian practice.

* Northfield Women's Foreign Missionary Conference, 1925.
Mr. Stauffer is educational secretary, Student Volunteer Movement.

Because of this fact we have come, in my judgment, in the first place, to an hour in Christian missions which I characterize as an hour of most humiliating exposure, and therefore of consternation at the home base.

Our Western civilization, especially its non-Christian elements, is held up for ridicule throughout the non-Christian world.

A Chinese said to me, just before I came back to America several years ago: "Do you know, I characterize your civilization in the West in three ways: First, its tremendous mechanical superstructure; second, its scientific approach; and third, Christianity admirably expressed individually, but inadequately expressed in corporate life."

Then he went on to say something like this, that when Constantine won his marvelous victory he inoculated the world with a minute dose of Christianity that it might never get the real disease.

"Do you know how you opened the Orient?" he asked me.

I asked him how, and he replied in words like these:

"Four or five hundred years ago you in the West had little that we in the East coveted. You had philosophy and science and metaphysics: so did we. But there came a time when your ancestors broke through that Mohammedan crescent to the South, when they stopped those Mongol hordes to the East, when they drove their ships across the unknown Atlantic, and you entered a period of invention and discovery which soon made the Western world both the master and the slave of things. We called your missionaries, when they came to us, and your foreign representatives, 'foreign devils,' not because you had blonde hair or blue eyes, but because you were so confoundedly ingenious with things. Why, you could make iron pull iron; wherever you went your things were sure to go! Did you send us a diplomat, it was to open the road for your things. Did you send us commercial representatives, it was to impose your things upon us. Did you send us missionaries, it was to persuade our people to your order of things."

He went on to say that the Orient might be described in its emancipation, so to speak, in these five steps. "In the first place," he said, "we were enamored of your things. We wanted them, and we took them. Then we came to the war with Japan, and we discovered that while it was fine to have these material products of the West, it would be better if we had men trained to handle these things. The British government sent a locomotive to the Empress Dowager in Peking. They put that engine on the tracks. The Empress Dowager invited all the officials to come and see this belching devil of the West. When they had all assembled, and they had built a fire in the firebox, the Chinese engineers were unable to make this foreign thing go, and they had to bring in coolies with ropes over their backs to pull this smoking devil along the track. 'It is fine,' they said, 'to have the things of the West, but we must have men trained to handle them.' And so they overthrew their old educational system, and introduced the educational system of the West,—the second step."

Then they came, in China especially, to the Boxer uprising, and they discovered that while they had the things of the West and men trained to handle them, they also needed a government sympathetic with the order of things: so they transformed their old government of a Manchu dynasty into a government ill adapted to their needs, a republic similar to America's.

The fourth step came just before the great war. It was fine to have the things of the West, fine to have men trained to handle these things, fine to have a government sympathetic with the order of things: but, said the Chinese, if we are ever to take our place among the nations of the world, we must have a philosophy of life based upon materialism, based upon the order of THINGS; and gradually they began to read our philosophy of life, and to take it over in toto.

Now nothing is more disastrous to the Orient than that, and nothing is more surely bringing its reaction today.

You watch a Japanese greeting another Japanese on the street! He stands here, while his friend is over yonder. He makes his low bow, he makes five or six of them.

You say: "Why, what a pity that he should take so much time to greet his friend! When we pass each other, we say

'Hello,' and turn around to see who it was that passed us."

And the Chinese said to themselves: "Now, the philosophy of the West is something like this: it is the struggle for survival of the fittest, the struggle for existence. If A does not get B, B gets A." And on the basis of that kind of a philosophy they endeavored to build up a new civilization.

Over here, if you get a thing done, if you exercise efficiency, if you report returns, we are apt to have no question regarding the methods or the philosophy that you used. Over there, personality is at the foundation of the whole philosophy of the Orient. We sometimes think, because of superstition or because of ignorance on the part of the lower masses, that this value of personality is absent in the life of the Orient. Remember, it is not absent! India and China, through Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi and other philosphers at Peking, are afraid of the materialism of the West. Said Mahatma Gandhi only a little while ago, "If I could only say the word which would set India free and would give India the materialism of the West, I should forever keep silent!" They are afraid that our philosophy of materialism is endangering spiritual values and slowly pushing them across precipices, to be forever lost,—values which the world in their judgment can ill afford to lose.

Then, this Chinese said: "We have come now to a fifth period. It followed the great war. We have found it is good to have the things of the West, good to have men trained to handle them, good to have a government sympathetic with the order of things, fine to have the philosophy of the West: but the war has shown us that all that glitters is not gold."

So they have begun to question just how much of value there is in our civilization worth preserving, and the young Chinese by the hundreds, and the young Indians, are going back to their storehouses of the past, and bringing out things new and old, and studying them. They are going to Western civilization and studying our conventions, our customs, our learning, and then in a spirit of pure science, without much reverence, they are revaluing, they are analyzing all these things in the East and in the West, and they are saying:

"We will take the best scientifically, the best out of the East and the best out of the West. China will come to the front rank of nations only as she does not imitate the civilization of the West, nor reproduce the civilization of the East, but actually constructs for herself a new civilization which shall be neither East nor West."

That is in essence the present renaissance or student movement throughout the Orient. They have no use for our non-Christian civilization.

Non-Christian Elements.

It is a period of humiliating exposure, in the second place, because the non-Christian elements in our industrial and social order have projected themselves around the world, and have reproduced fruit after their own kind.

You can go to any port city anywhere throughout the non-Christian world and you can find cesspools of iniquity, injustice and misery, which would make you feel ashamed of the homelands from which these industries have come.

The Chinese have said to me: "Oh, if you could build a wall, if you could build some sort of a cordon around the endemic centers of Western industry, and keep Western industry from our shores, we might be able by our clan and family systems and by the application of the principles of Jesus to evolve an economic order that shall be more Christian than anything you can send us!"

The year after the war the American consulate in Shanghai averaged the entry of a new American firm every day for a year. Passing our house in Shanghai every morning at five o'clock were wheelbarrow loads of Chinese children from the ages of eight to twelve, with their little wicker baskets of rice, going to the cotton mills, the underwear factories, the silk filatures, or the flour mills. Some of those little girls were working from twelve to fourteen hours a day. They were getting a mere pittance. Mothers were working at the spinning wheels with little babies nursing at their breasts, or with their little babies thrown in the corner, where they were almost covered by the dirt or

the lint of the cotton factories. No sanitary legislation, no Christian ideals in the handling of their employees: just pure pagan Western industrial situations and practices!

Unequal Political Treatment.

It is a period of humiliating exposure, because, in the third place, the so-called Christian nations of the West are being held up for contempt because of their unequal treaties of the past, their un-Christian guns, their insatiate greed; because of the very foundation on which the League of Nations is built, a foundation which has never admitted the equality of races, and never proposes to change the status quo, by which four-fifths of the world's property is in the control of the white race.

In Kenya colony in Africa the natives have a saying that before Kenya was known to the Christian nations the Kenya Africans had land, but no Bibles: now they have Bibles, but no land.

Some few months ago, after our own Japanese discriminatory act, a number of Japanese students who were being taught by an American missionary on the subject of Christian ethics, bolted their classroom and put upon the door this sign:

"You teach us Christian ethics! Whom should you teach Christian ethics, Japanese or Americans?"

If you want to do Christian work in the capital city of China, all you need do is to go to some of those young pagan officials and try to tell them of the goodwill of America, and the fine life of church members throughout this country. They will ridicule you and sneer at you, and say:

"What do you mean? How do you account for Christians in America giving money to send us missionaries, and also giving money to build a larger navy to fight Japan? Or how do you account for the United States government continuing to be a party with a dozen or more other so-called Christian nations in refusing to China the privilege of tariff autonomy for the last seventy-five years or more?"

"We and other Western nations have demanded of China that she shall not charge more than a nominal five per cent import and export duty on goods. How long would we as an American nation stand for that kind of injustice? How could we develop our resources or our native industries? Japan today charges 355% import duty on tobacco; China still can charge only 5%. Is that fair? Is that Christian? Is that American goodwill and American Christian love?

Organized Christianity.

It is a period of humiliating exposure because our organized Christianity is very much ridiculed.

Said a Japanese recently: "Your Christianity has come to the Orient with a shell on its back, and we Orientals are not sure that we can creep into the shell and maintain our self-respect."

They think that our organized Christianity is the slave of institutionalism, ecclesiasticism, dogmas, and creeds, many of which Christ himself might drive out of our midst, as he drove out the money-changers from the Temple.

An Indian said: "Your Christ is hopelessly handicapped."

Russia and China have a longer common border between them than any other two nations in Asia or Europe, and the biggest and most dominant thing in China today is Russian thought. Now the Russian government has little use for religion. They call it the opiate of the masses. They say that Christianity is in league with militarism and with capitalism. Is it any wonder that some time ago some students wrote this and posted it on the door of some of the schools in northern China:

"Of all religions Christianity, we feel, is the most detestable. One sin which Christianity is guilty of, and which particularly makes our hair rise on end, is its collusion with militarism and capitalism. The influence of Christianity is growing stronger day by day, and when this force becomes more triumphant, the methods of capitalism will become more drastic. Christianity is the public enemy of mankind, just as militarism and capitalism are, since they have one thing in common, to exploit weak countries. Realizing that China has long been an object of exploitation of the capitalistic, imperialistic countries of the world, Christianity is utilizing this opportunity to extend its influence. It is the intelligence officer of the capitalistic and the hireling of the imperialistic countries. If no effort is

made to exterminate this evil, it is impossible to foretell its dangers in the future."

You may think that is rather alarmist and extraordinary. It is indeed, and it is the influence of Sovietism in certain sections of China among certain groups; but nevertheless we have got to look carefully into our own organized Christianity to see whether or not it makes possible our sincerely following unreservedly the will of Jesus, and becoming real disciples of his.

Personally, I feel that we as a conference ought to render a prayer of thanksgiving to God that this period of humiliating exposure has at last come. We have too long waited for this kind of a reaction, and there is nothing more promising for the future, and more to be welcomed by the missionary, because he goes over there not to deny this charge,—he goes over to confess that we are non-Christian in many aspects of our life, he goes over to cry against the evils which we project, he goes over to say:

"Let us in common seek for a new spirit and a new life, the life of Christ!"

An Hour of Deliverance.

In the second place, it is an hour of deliverance, I should say, from old hypocrisies and inequalities.

The older missionaries knew perfectly well that American life was not truly Christian, and they tried as hard as they could to tell these other folks that they were not bringing Western civilization, that they were not bringing organized Christianity, that they were simply bringing the Christ. But those people would not believe it. They thought that all Americans were Christians, that our civilization was totally Christian, that Christianity had proved itself wholly practical. The war lifted the veil with a vengeance, and at last the old hypocrisy complex for the missionary has gone. He stands revealed, and it is possible for him now to return to the simplicity and to the primary elements of the Christian message.

It was impossible years ago for us to get beyond the superiority complex. Our whole attitude toward life, our political situation, our racial prejudices, our blind ignorance, our arrogance as a race, our theological arrogance, let me say, forced upon us a sort of superiority complex. Today that has quite gone, or is fast going. The missionary now meets the other man eye to eye and heart to heart. It is a real handicap to be a white man in the Orient today. Those people are not content any longer to carry your baggage, they are not content any longer to regard your wishes as commands. They do not knock on your door, and wait for your convenience, and beg a mere pittance of salary out of your imperialistic hands. That whole attitude has gone. Burns was right:

> "It's comin' yet for a' that,
> That man to man, the warld o'er,
> Shall brothers be for a' that!"

Isn't it a magnificent period!

And in the third place, it is a period of reverent and unprejudiced evaluation of other races, civilizations and religions.

There are no longer any inferior races: there are backward races.

As we go into the storehouse of the other civilizations or cultures, who can tell what riches we may be able to find to add to our own?

Years ago we had a narrow and intolerant attitude toward other religions. Many of our missionaries thought that they were just so much work of the devil. We defamed their temples. Some of us went in and pulled down their idols. We sent their idols home to the churches, to be put on the pulpit or in our homes as an appeal for funds or interest or prayers. We walked into the temples with our hats on. We do not do that any more. We believe that there are religious aspirations and longings in the hearts of all those peoples that we ought to respect, and we believe that we need not scatter the little light that may be there in order that the most light may shine in.

Missionary Readjustment.

In the fourth place, it is an hour in Christian Missions of revolutionary readjustment in missionary policy.

They have the saying in certain sections of China: "The first generation of missionaries were our fathers; the second generation were our masters; the third generation are our brothers."

What a significant word that is! Gradually, if not rapidly, responsibilities are

passing over from the shoulders of our missionaries to worthy, responsible, consecrated native men and women in those lands. It was only natural that we should carry the burden in the years gone by, but now that indigenous leaders are coming to the front, is it not natural that the burdens should be transferred? We are exchanging an extensive policy for an intensive one. We are gradually endeavoring to produce a more balanced piece of work, not only doing evangelistic work, but doing educational and medical work, trying to show the social implication of the gospel and trying to make Jesus regnant or dominant not only over certain areas, but in all the varied areas of life and thought in any community.

We are also rapidly overcoming some of the evils which naturally resulted from our sense of immediacy and haste in the earlier days. For example, we went over, a hundred or even fifty years ago, and we thought there was no time for us even to make possible the expression of religious longing by the Chinese or the Indians themselves. We took our hymns, we had them translated, and we took our tunes. We took a little organ, and our wives to play on this little organ, and we played our tunes and we sang our hymns, only in their language. They are beginning to wonder whether the time has not come when we ought to abandon some of those hymns, and probably abandon all of the Western tunes; whether the time has not come when we may expect from Chinese and Indian and African and Latin-American Christians poetry expressive of their religious longings and aspirations, and whether this should not be sung accompanied by native instruments. I wonder if they are not right!

They are wondering, too, whether we need to build churches according to plans which we have transferred from America, and so make our architecture an eyesore on the landscape. They are wondering whether we need to transfer all our small denominational emphases, and continue to perpetuate them across the seas. They cannot quite understand why there should be a Northern Presbyterian Christian in South China, and a Southern Baptist Christian in Northern Mongolia. They cannot understand why we who have gone over there and parceled out great areas for ourselves, calling them spheres of evangelistic responsibility, should continue to hug those areas to ourselves and say, "Now, you keep out of that area! That is our church area: don't you come in! We will take responsibility for that." You know, something is going to happen if we carry on like that. If we insist on Methodism all over the world, or a world Presbyterianism, or something like that, something is going to happen!

There are only two or three alternatives in this situation which we have built up for ourselves. Either we have got to follow our converts from field to field, and build them churches, and send them missionaries, and pay their pastors' salaries, and so enormously increase our expeditures; or we shall have to let them go uncared for; or we shall have to let them be received in other churches, and our particular emphases, our particular doctrines, be sandpapered down until we are not quite able to distinguish between one denomination and another. All over the mission field that sandpapering is going on. Are we in the home churches willing to adapt ourselves to that inevitable process? Are we willing to contribute to the cause of Christ in these native lands, not that converts may be made for our denomination, but that the work of the kingdom may go forward? And are we willing to see large union educational institutions, like your own women's colleges, spring up over the land, where we shall not say, "This is our college, our Methodist college, or our Southern Presbyterian college," but where we shall be able to say, "This is the college of the church of Christ in India, or the church of Christ in Africa"?

A Creative Period.

It is a period, in the next place, which I sometimes characterize as a creative period for Christianity: because you know as well as I that Christianity does not amount to much until it is expressed in the thought and experience of the people who really accept it.

We have had more or less of a foreign stamp on our organization and on our interpretation of Christianity. It could not be helped: it was inevitable. But now that a large number of able, splendid men and women are coming up in the ranks of those

native churches, is it not conceivable that they should apply themselves to this one task of putting the interpretation of God's Word into the thought and experience of their own race?

For example, the translation of the Scriptures. The Chinese church wants much to have an indigenous translation of the Scriptures. What do they mean by that? Well, up to the present all the translation of the Scriptures has been in this wise: We have had a commission, with six or seven Chinese and three or four foreigners. The foreigners knew the original sources, Hebrew and Greek, and they put their glasses on and looked at the original, and they said:

"Gentlemen, I think that in the original the meaning of this passage is so and so. Mr. Li, will you kindly tell us how to put this meaning in good Chinese?"

Mr. Li would do his best to put that meaning in good Chinese.

But now the Chinese Christians want scholarship sufficient to look at the original sources for themselves, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit determine what the meaning is and put that meaning in Chinese. Are we willing to trust the Holy Spirit, who leads all men who confide in him into all truth,—are we willing to trust that the interpretation those men make of the Scriptures will be as faultless, as adequate a guide as the interpretations that we have placed in our different versions? It is a period of embarrassment and a period of creative Christianity.

I have two little boys, twins, born in China. They are just about three. Shortly after I got back from China I was traveling among the colleges in the West, and I noticed that in one of the magazines they were to have quite a baby exhibit in Madison Square Garden in New York. Now, of course, being a proud father, I knew that my children were the best looking and the healthiest children in all the world, and I knew that they had been accustomed to international contacts and maintained their poise: so, I thought, in the presence of doctors and nurses and a crowd they might make a pretty good showing. So I wired home to Mrs. Stauffer and said:

"Don't you want to take the babies down to that show?"

Down she went, and two or three days later I got a telegram saying that my Chinese babies had won first prize, blue ribbon and fifty dollars. I promised my wife never to tell that story again, but whenever I come before an audience of young people I always feel that it helps to tell these young people that it is possible to live a happy married life abroad, and that it is also possible for the foreign product to outshine home goods.

Some time, it is conceivable, those twin boys of mine may meet me on the street as I come home from the office with a paper in their hands, and say:

"O Daddy, look! See what I drew! Mother gave us a pencil, and we drew it all ourselves."

On that sheet of paper there may be nothing but scribbles, and they might say as they walked home with me:

"Daddy, you can't guess what that is!"

I would say: "Sure I can guess!" and I would go into the house, put them by my side on the davenport, and take this paper; and they would be all giggles, listening to what I had to guess. Finally I would look it over, and I would say:

"I know! That must be our house."

They would say: "No, Daddy, that ain't our house! Can't you see?"

And I would say: "Yes, I can see. Give me another chance!"

I look again, and I remember, and say: "Oh, that must be our neighbor's dog across the street, isn't it?"

"No, Daddy," they would say, "that ain't the dog across the street! Daddy, can't you see?"

I would say: "Sure I can see! Just give me time!"

I look the paper over again, and I remember they have been out on an automobile trip with a neighbor, out on some farm; and I say:

"I know! That is one of those little black pigs that you saw out there on that farm the other day."

And they will kick and say: "No, Daddy, you can't see! Daddy, that's you!"

Now, do you suppose that I should be discouraged because those little chaps depicted the image that they had of their father in scribbles like that, that they could see their daddy in those scribbles,

and I could not? No: I should take their hands in mine, and put a pencil in their little hands, and make a big circle, and a dot, another dot, a dash, and another dash, and I would say, "That's Daddy!" I should teach them more and more each day as well as I am able, and if they had skill, I should some day send them to an artist. Who knows, friends, but that some day one of those little fellows may paint a picture of his daddy that will hang on the museum walls, and you will pay money to see it hanging there?

And is it not just like our loving heavenly Father that he should make it so, that the image of our God which we think we see in the face of Jesus Christ shall never be complete and never be overwhelming as we gaze upon it until we shall have the contribution of every race and every nation, of every child of that common Father? Is it not true that a universal Christ needs a universal interpretation, and that we shall never stoop in awe and cry, "My Lord and my God!" before that revelation of our God until we have contributions from all races and all peoples?

It is a period of creative Christianity, and we are in my judgment on the edge of a tremendous mystical and spiritual emphasis in religious life.

In the next place, it is a period of adolescence.

It is natural, don't you know, that under the influence of national and racial consciousness, because of the injustices of the West, because of our arrogance, that the younger people of rather backward countries should resent a good deal that we say regarding them, and should make exaggerated claims for themselves.

Today you hear it said among foreign students: "Why, America is as non-Christian as the rest of the world!"

They do not mean that, but they say it.

Or they say: "We do not want your Christianity: all we want is Christ."

They do not mean that. We have a tremendously rich heritage which they covet and spiritually need.

Or they say: "We do not need any more missionaries: we can evangelize our own country. Just give us a chance! Train our leaders, and we will carry the burden!"

They do not mean that. Four or five years ago half of the interior provinces of China had only a score of ordained pastors working among millions of people. Forty-six per cent of China is still wholly unevangelized. A whole continent within a continent in Latin America; 16,000,000 Indians in an underworld of fear. They do not mean that they can do it alone. But you see it is just like the exaggerated claims of an over-sensitive, somewhat hurt, adolescent child.

We in the West have got to take a kindly attitude for the next fifty years toward these little, struggling, indigenous churches abroad. We must not complain. We must not ask for a full share in administrative responsibility. We must relinquish control, and yet we must pay the bills. You women must be working in the missionary society just as hard for the next hundred years, but your missionaries will not order the business over there. You will not have so much to say about how your money is spent, but just the same, in the spirit of Christ, as a mother or father, you will meet the bills.

Need for Leadership.

In the last place, it is a period of tremendous need for spiritual leadership in native and foreign workers.

You read a great deal about the agitation on the field against foreign missionaries. There would be no agitation against any foreign missionary if he went over there first of all to be an administrator of Christian life and Christian discipleship. The difficulty is that so many of us go over to be a part in a great institutional piece of work. We go over there to run a certain kind of machinery, to organize a certain kind of business, instead of going over there to live a certain quality of life.

Timothy Loo said: "Do not stop sending us missionaries: send us better ones!" Another said: "If you could only send one thousand young men and young women who would not come over here to do anything, to organize any work, to run any institution, but just come over here to live a Christian life!"

One burning heart sets another on fire. After all, this missionary business is not nearly so complicated as most of us think.

It is just taking Jesus in our own experience to the people whom we meet, and letting them apply the principles of Jesus to their family and social relationships. Oh, if we could only come back to that insistence on the part of our missionaries on the spiritual quality of the life that they live!

Said a Chinese to me, of a missionary walking across the paddy fields north of Nanking, several years ago:

"Look! There goes allee same Jesus to me!"

Friends, the peril of the present moment in Christian missions is that we may so institutionalize our work, we may put such emphasis on technical preparation and specialization of service, that we get people over there who are splendid social service workers, but who know little of the redemptive work of Jesus. Or we may send people over there who are good educators, but who know nothing of Christ's value in an immortal life, or who have not experienced the saving grace of Christ in their own life. Let us be on the watch, and oh, let us sanctify ourselves, and know that we ourselves can never be made perfect without them!

Visualize, if you will, as you go to your home churches and to your women's societies, these little struggling churches, with all the temptations and burdens and oppositions coming down upon them like some overwhelming weight, trying to walk, and stumbling again and again; with inadequately trained leadership, with all sorts of inconsistencies in their own lives, with the problem of the nurture and discipline of their own first and second generation Christians! Shut your eyes and visualize what it means to have only eight Christians among ten thousand people! You think you have a job in your church when you have only twenty women in the missionary society out of a membership of three hundred. What would it be if you only had one Christian out of a thousand?

Oh for the passion of a Paul! "Who is not weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I burn not?" Shall we not consecrate ourselves anew for the world?

DR. GRENFELL ON THE SITUATION IN CHINA.

Dear Moody:

I wish you would bring to the attention of your people the vast importance of letting the truth be known to the world about the situation in China. Peace in China means peace in the East, and for that all missionaries stand. Yet I have failed to see any official pronunciation by the missionaries as to the right or wrong of the Shanghai riots, except in Peking. Was it right to shoot down Chinese students?

General Feng claims that it was quite unnecessary and wrong, and in any other country would have called for a national apology. His statements are being used to disparage him by calling him "The Red General."

I went out to see Marshal Feng, and looked up his record at his birthplace, Paoting Fu, where Dr. Lewis, who has known him for many years, has complete confidence in him. Robert Gailey of the Y. M. C. A., and Lawrence Mead of Peking, have confidence in Feng. It is well known that he doesn't allow opium to be grown, and wherever I went to inquire into the facts I found Feng doing the things that modern enlightened workers and missionaries would be doing. At the same time, holding rigidly to the fundamentalist's doctrines with regard to Christian teaching, I read everywhere, in every paper, sneers, slights, and even grotesque statements about the Chinese general, and no one defending him from the point of view of actual facts. I went to visit Pastor Li, who was the means of his conversion, and who baptized him. Pastor Li loves him.

General Feng stands alone on the northern border, a lonely figure, but so far as any one can see, trying to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ under most trying circumstances and difficulties: the Reds pouring down from Urga, Chang Tsao Lin unfriendly behind him in Manchuria, general ill-feeling in Europe, the press blackguarding him. At a legation where I visited, the diplomats unfriendly and telling tales about him.

When I asked him on leaving what he would like me to do for him in America or Europe, he answered:

"If you have any friends who believe in prayer, won't you ask them to pray for me, that I may have wisdom?"

What I feel the missionaries ought to do today is to bring out strongly the fact that if we go on calling a man a Bolshevist who isn't one, and others go on making it apparently a mark of hypocrisy for a leader to call himself a Christian, which it is a fact that they do, we may be doing the best kind of propaganda for Bolshevism without knowing it. By "others" I mean the tourist and casual foreigner.

The eminent professor of Chinese at the University of Cambridge, England, wrote in the public papers:

"Marshal Feng is the greatest blackguard who ever appeared on the stage in China."

I wrote and asked him for the facts as to why he said so, and I have his reply which says, he "had always known it."

Feng is a man of action. His record is admirable. He has made no money. He lives simply. He is educating his soldiers, giving them trades and providing for their future. He made life and business safe when he held Peking. The people know him well both in Peking and Nanfuang. It is false that he ill-treated his wife. She died in the Rockefeller of typhoid with two nurses attending her, and Feng riding in every day, thirty miles, to see her. The president whom he deposed, Tsao, was a corrupt scoundrel. The honest man whom Feng put in that place is still there. It is false that he murdered Tsao's brother by gross cruelty, leaving him in the snow all night naked. Tsao's brother died in the Rockefeller of diabetes; I looked up his record.

What Feng says is that the missionaries should care less about being considered unpatriotic if they go out in the open and attach the blame for the Shanghai troubles where it belongs, as at last we have the blame put in the right place for the shooting of Chinamen at Hong Kong. A Chinaman in this country, an earnest Christian man, tells me that the trouble in China is that the "China Old Guard" still think that China is as it was in 1920, when a coolie could be shot down in the street and no one care. But now China is a nation, and no one can shoot down a coolie as they used to, without any one making inquiry. He is part of the nation. I think China can only hold together as a United States, but today Marshal Feng is her best hope.

What Feng is complaining about today is that we are not speaking out, for some reason or other, when officials in high places do wrong things. He says we are therefore not treading in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, who told us to love one another and love our enemies, and who was put to death not because of that, but because he denounced the authorities in the Temple. The missionaries are not afraid today. They do not want the protection of the state. If they have the spirit of Christ they can't possibly want it. Can any one suppose that Christ wanted a safe conduct from the Cæsars?

I am passing on to you Feng's request to me, that if you have any people who believe that prayer makes a difference in politics and in World affairs, they will pray for him to have wisdom and courage. And that General Chang Tsao Lin, son of the old bandit general, who is an Oxford graduate and is studying Christianity, may soon decide to come out as a Christian man and stand side by side with Feng, holding the entire northern border of China against the Bolshevists, who are the absolute enemies of Christianity.

Gandhi in India told me much the same thing. He said: "If your Christians were like Christ, we would all have been Christians long ago." Gandhi is trying to do the things Jesus would do.

We personally have got our problems in Labrador, and are working hard at so many ventures that world affairs do seem too big for us. Just at present we are trying to raise the bricks to build a hospital which will be fit to hold all the helpless sick people and give them the treatment we want. So beyond praying for China, at present I can do very little, but there are thousands who would be more than glad to do more if they only knew the critical nature of the situation, and that these two great men, Marshal Feng and General Chang Tsao Lin (Junior), are trying to do the thing which Christ would do, gifted with certainly as much faith as the apostles of old were before the crucifixion of our Lord and the day of Pentecost.

Most sincerely yours,
(Signed) Wilfred Grenfell.

DEEPENING ONE'S SENSE OF GOD.*

Rev. James Gordon Gilkey.

There are more people without a sense of God than we realize.

Some time ago one of my students at Amherst made this interesting confession:

"Religion used to be a complete mystery to me. It seemed queer, unearthly, useless. Now I begin to see certain parts of it in a different light. I think I can appreciate the Bible as a masterpiece of literature and a record of the world's advancing religious thought. Jesus is no longer a strange creature, but the greatest personality the world has ever known. Yet I must confess I see no proof of God. I have tried to keep an open mind on that question, but the very element of common sense which you have urged us to apply to religion seems to me to shatter all notion of a deity. I have had many long discussions of the subject, and I have tried my best to repeat your arguments for the reality of God, but none of them help me. As I grow older I shall keep on trying to figure things out, and perhaps some day I shall see the light."

There are numberless people who feel just as that boy did. Some elements in religion they readily understand and appreciate. They have admirable moral ideals and a genuine interest in philanthropy. But God, the central element in it all,—there the doubts begin. Can they not explain the universe without mentioning him at all? Have they ever had a personal experience that could honestly be called an "experience of God"?

Thomas Hardy was speaking for thousands of honest doubters in his extraordinary poem, "God's Funeral":

I saw a slowly-stepping train,
Lined on the brows, scoop-eyed, and bent and hoar,
Following in files across a twilit plain.
A strange and mystic form the foremost bore.

O man-projected Figure, of late
Imaged as we, thy knell who shall survive?
Whence came it we were tempted to create
One whom we can no longer keep alive?

Then in the background some I saw,—
Sweet women, youths, men, all incredulous,—
Who chimed, "This is a counterfeit of straw;
This requiem, mockery! God still lives to us."

And they composed a crowd, of whom
Some were right good, and many nigh the best.
Thus dazed and puzzled 'twixt the gleam and gloom,
Mechanically I followed with the rest.

There are the honest doubters of today.

In such a situation what can we say to puzzled boys and girls? What can we do to give them a sense of God?

We might begin by reminding our young people that the existence of honest skeptics is no proof that the people who do believe in God are deluded.

How easy it would be to find a thousand people who see nothing whatever in music! Spend an evening at a concert where eighty men puff wearily into tin horns, or drag horse-hair bows over cat-gut strings? Nothing beautiful there! The alleged inspiration is a delusion. If it were "real," would not everyone feel it? But surely the testimony of these non-musical people does not prove that those who do enjoy music are the victims of self-deception. Rather it demonstrates the extraordinary variations in human temperament. Around us all is the world of music,—its splendor, its power to inspire, its "reality" as genuine as anything we know. Some people have a mental and spiritual mechanism sensitive enough to appropriate all that beauty. Others grasp only part of it. Others miss it entirely.

The same principle seems to hold true in the realm of the religious life. The geniuses of religion—Jesus supremely,—tell us that an eternal Spirit is forever active in our world. All about us is an infinite God, with power, love, purpose, unfailing mercy. You say you have never sensed such a God? Of course your personal difficulties do not prove that everyone who does believe in him is mistaken. Those difficulties show, rather, that you have what we are learning to call the non-religious temperament.

One day a lady was visiting the studio of Joseph Turner, the great English artist. She stood for a long time before one of his most gorgeous paintings, a study of light playing on sea and sky at evening. Then she turned to say incredulously:

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* Northfield Woman's Home Mission Conference, 1925.

Mr. Gilkey is a Congregationalist pastor in Springfield, Mass.

"But, Mr. Turner, I never see any sunsets like yours!"

The artist hesitated, and then replied gently:

"No, madam. Don't you wish you could?"

Were the colors an illusion, or did the visitor have the wrong temperament?

We can also remind our young people that many who are skeptical about God at twenty find their way to an unshaken faith before forty.

After all, there is such a thing as taking youthful doubts too seriously.

Here, for instance, is an English student of twenty-one. He is writing to a friend:

"You believe you have a sustaining hand to lead you along your path, an invisible protector and an unerring guide. I, alas, have no such stay! I have only that abused and stupefied reason which has stumbled and wandered and betrayed me a thousand times, and is now ready at this moment to faint and give up the unequal struggle."

But that boy's doubts were not permanent. His name was Charles Kingsley. Later years found him one of the most influential preachers in England.

Or here is an American student twenty years old. He confesses: "There has come in me a great revulsion against my earlier ideas. My mind has taken a tremendous spring over into skepticism. I have been a fool long enough. I will not stir one step further in my beliefs till I can actually see my way, and I will not stand a moment where I cannot locate undoubted truth. Henceforth I will have something sure and steadfast."

That boy's skepticism lasted two full years. Then one by one his uncertainties vanished, and Henry Ward Beecher found himself at the beginning of a career of amazing influence.

You are disturbed over your children,—their doubts about God, their indifference to everything spiritual? How many parents have had to learn the long, hard lesson of patience!

"December winds were brief and chill,
The winds of March were wild and drear,
And nearing and receding still,
Spring never would, we thought, be here.
The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,
Had none the less their certain date:
And thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, refrain thyself, and wait!"

Suppose we grant these obvious preliminary facts, what can we do to strengthen the sense of God in a normal child of today?

The first thing we should do is explain clearly and without pious generalities just what we mean by the sense of God.

Surely it is high time for someone to talk honestly and frankly on this sadly-misunderstood topic. Two generations ago a young man who later became famous as a revival preacher passed through a strange "conversion experience" which he himself describes in these words:

"The rising of my soul was so great that I rushed into the back room of the office to pray. There was neither fire nor light in the room, nevertheless it appeared to me as if it were perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. It did not occur to me that it was wholly a mental state. On the contrary, it seemed that I saw Christ as I would see any other man. He said nothing, but looked at me in such a manner as to break me right down at his feet. I wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterance. When, some time later, I left that room and returned to the front office, I received a sudden and mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, the Holy Spirit descended upon me and seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings. I wept aloud with joy and love. How long I continued in this state, with this baptism continuing to roll over me and through me, I do not know, but late in the evening a friend came in and found me weeping loudly. He said, 'Mr. Finney, are you in pain?' I gathered myself together as best I could, and replied, 'No, but I am so happy I cannot live.'"

There is a series of spectacular occurrences which an older generation called a genuine experience of God. Is this the kind of spiritual experience a normal boy would

have today? Is it the kind of experience you would want him to have? Let us be frank and honest! You and I never had such an experience. We should be greatly alarmed if our children had it. We should instantly suspect some severe nervous disorder. This may not be conventional sermonizing, but it is the sober truth. What has happened in the realm of religious thought? Within the past few decades we have begun to dissociate the divine and the spectacular. We have unravelled the religious and the abnormal. We have begun to look for God in wholly new phases of human experience. Our generation has initiated a new era in Christian thought.

Where will a normal child of today find God? What are the experiences which, as his parents can honestly tell him, bring his life close to the life of the Eternal?

If you watch a normal boy developing in the years after babyhood, you will notice several changes in his mind and spirit.

You will see the slow emergence of a definite moral faculty. That boy begins to distinguish between right and wrong, he begins to speak of his "conscience," and he finds an imperious sense of duty impelling him constantly in certain directions. This is part of the experience of any normal child. What does it mean? Some of us are convinced that God is at work. The eternal power-for-right is touching that boy's life, fitting him to appreciate the difference between right and wrong, and training him to take his place on the side of right.

You also find this boy displaying a new instinct for kindness. He did not have it as a little child. Tiny children are notoriously cruel, like those racial children we call primitive men. But as the boy of today enters his teens, new impulses toward kindness waken within him. He begins to feel that he must show consideration for other people, especially those who are unable to care for themselves. As the years pass this instinct becomes more and more powerful, till at twenty this boy—if he is anything like the finer boys of his generation,—honestly tries to discover in what particular calling he can be of greatest help to the world. What does it all mean? It means that God is at work in that boy's life. The eternal love, toiling from age to age to create a finer and a kinder world, is fitting that boy to take his part in the great effort of the centuries.

And here is a third thing you find in that boy's life. You find dawning hopes and dreams, growing ideals and aspirations. Steadily they call that boy forward, impelling him to try to make more and more of his little life. A boy without such dreams? You might as well look for a river that has no impulse to run down into the sea!

"Brother Stream,
Why do you run and run and run?
Do you hope some day to fill the sea?

"Brother Tree,
Why do you reach and reach and reach?
Do you hope some day to touch the sky?

"Brother Bird,
Why do you sing and sing and sing?
Do you hope . . . .

"Young Man,
Why do you dream and dream and dream?

Who wakens these dreams in us all? Who lifts ideals in splendor about us until their very glory shames us out of sin and selfishness and inertia? Some of us think it is God who does this. We no longer look for him in the strange experiences of an unbalanced personality, or in the imaginings of an over-stimulated brain. We look for him in the quiet awakening of conscience, kindness, aspiration. This is the normal man's experience of God. And this is the only kind of spiritual awakening most of us ever expect to have.

If we interpret the spiritual life in normal terms like these, will we not impoverish the Christianity of the future? Will we not wreck religion?

Look, for your answer, at the change that has come in other departments of human life!

At the beginning of the third century there was an eclipse of the sun visible in northern Africa. Tertullian, the great preacher of the day, instantly announced that it was an evidence of God's wrath against the local unbelievers. After the execution of Charles I there was another solar eclipse visible in England. Hundreds

of Englishmen whispered that it was a sign of God's displeasure at contemporary political developments. Shortly after President Chauncey of Harvard died in 1672 there was another eclipse of the sun visible in Boston. Dr. Increase Mather was promptly stirred to announce that even God himself shared the grief of the college. On May 19, 1780, the shadow of another eclipse stole over Connecticut. The state legislature, assembled in Hartford, was thrown into a panic. Some of the legislators rushed for the doors of the hall, others fell on their knees praying hysterically. One man, blessed with more than ordinary common sense, shouted through the deepening gloom:

"This is either the second coming of Christ, or it is not. If it is not, we are making fools of ourselves. If it is, the Lord cannot find us in any better employment than attending to the work for which we are here. I move that the candles be brought in, and that we proceed to business."

Has humanity lost anything by moving away from ignorance and toward knowledge? Would we have been better off yesterday had our eclipse thrown us into a panic of superstitious fear? The fact is, human life has improved vastly by throwing off the strange astronomical notions that came down from the primitive world. Human life will improve again when religious thought is freed from the last superstitions of a pre-psychological age.

You think the cause of Christ will be threatened because we let in the light of our new knowledge, and begin to interpret the experience of God in terms educated people can respect? Far from it! Such a procedure will strengthen immeasurably the appeal of Christianity to the modern world. It will heal the wretched feud between science and faith, the old quarrel between common sense and religion. Most important of all, it will enable us to show thousands of normal people that they have already had an experience of God, and that he is a reality in our life today, just as he was in the life of that peerless exponent of intelligence, Jesus of Nazareth.

What is our new gospel for the next generation? Listen to one of our most eminent Christian teachers:

"Some people are confused and timid and non-committal because they do not see how being religious is different from simply living a good life. Other people are waiting for some special, phenomenal revelation which shall convey to them a message from God not otherwise obtainable. Their attitude is like that of the bird and the fish in the familiar poem.

> 'O where is the sea? cried the fish,
> O where is the air? said the bird.'

The religious experience is not something different from living a good life. It is simply living a good life more abundantly."

"Everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." "Everyone that loveth." There is our new faith!

Suppose we accept these new ideas, suppose we recognize God in conscience, in kindness, in high aspirations, these realities so familiar to us all, how can we go on to deepen our sense of God?

Surely no question in religion is more important than this. There are two concrete suggestions the men with the new views would make.

If you want to deepen your sense of God, put your life on the highest level you know, and then make a persistent effort to keep it there!

One of the most profound things Jesus ever said bears directly on this point. "Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God." Who are the pure in heart? They are the people who are living steadily and resolutely at their best. To them Jesus promises the ultimate experience of the religious life,—the discovery of God.

If you want to deepen your spiritual life, here is the obvious way to begin. Have you ever thought of putting out of your life all the grudges that you carried from the old year into the new? Certainly your heart will never be pure till bitterness and malice are swept away. The grudge against the man who cheated you in business twenty years ago,—that must be left behind. The bitterness against the people who complicate so unhappily the situation in your home,—that too must go. The vindictive spirit you cherish against the one who stepped between you and success,—"forgive us, as we forgive!"

Hard to do all this? Of course it is hard! But you are asking for one of the most precious experiences in human life,—

a sense of the reality of God. You must be prepared to pay for it. Why not begin now? "Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

"Whether the time be slow or fast,
Enemies, hand in hand,
Must come together at the last,
And understand.
No matter how the die is cast,
Or who may seem to win,
You know that you must love at last:
Why not begin?"

Here is the other suggestion: Find how and when and where your own sense of God is quickened, and then seek God through that experience every day of your life!

Eleven centuries ago a medieval mystic wrote: "There are as many unveilings of God as there are saintly souls."

How true to human experience then and now! Each one of us has his own path to God. Each one of us finds some one spot at which the light beyond begins to glimmer down into our dull human mind. There are people listening to these words who can invariably quicken their sense of the Eternal by withdrawing from the confusion of life, turning to the great silence within their own heart, and then waiting. "And when earthquake, wind, and fire had passed there came a still, small voice." Two thousand years ago, and again today. Silence, ... and then the voice of the Eternal.

There are other people here for whom such a discipline is futile. "It makes me feel queer and uncomfortable," one such girl confessed. "When I try to grow quiet and think about God, God is the one thing I cannot think of. Instantly I become hopelessly self-conscious."

But there are ways in which that girl's spiritual sense can be quickened. Through the ritual of a church service, through self-forgetful service of others, through music or art or poetry, or through contact with the glory of nature.

"There are as many unveilings of God as there are saintly souls." Some of you will recall the lovely lines Sara Teasdale wrote after a memorable evening by the sea. Her sonnet begins:

There was an evening when the sky was clear,
Ineffably translucent in its blue,
The tide was falling, and the sea withdrew
In hushed and happy music from the sheer,
Shadowy granite of the cliffs. The fear
Of what life may be, and what death can do,
Fell from us like steel armor, and we knew
The beauty of the law that holds us here.
It was as though we saw the secret will . . . .

"Saw the secret will,"—there is the experience of which we are speaking. There was the precise stimulus that quickened the finer impulses in the poet's heart. There was the point at which the light beyond broke through.

There is some act by which you can quicken your sense of God. Find what it is, and then every day of your life seek God along that path! Prayer, worship, silence, sacrificial service, communion with beauty,—what are they all but roads on which we stumble forward toward the Eternal and he silently and persistently advances toward us?

Suppose we follow spiritual disciplines like these, what will we gain?

In all probability no one of us will ever have a startling or a spectacular experience of God. Our type of personality, our long training in critical thought, our very attitude toward religion, make such an experience improbable.

What will our deepened sense of God be? As the years pass, you and I will win the unshakable conviction that there is someone friendly behind the universe. A purpose-for-good, surrounding the myriad little efforts the generations make, and uniting them all in the great forward-thrust of progress. An undefeated intelligence, ordering the slow movement of the centuries, and eventually swinging life into the path of its wise choosing. An eternal love, from which, as Paul affirmed centuries ago, "neither death nor life, things present nor things to come, can separate us."

For unnumbered generations men have been finding this friendly Someone. In one phrase after another they have struggled to describe their experience. Two thousand years ago an unknown seer wrote, "Underneath thee are the everlasting arms." Years later Socrates, finding amid the darkness of defeat and death this same reality, said quietly: "No evil can befall a good man in this world or in the world to

come." And in our own day a Quaker poet, reaching out and meeting the same Friend, sang:

"I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air:
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

Call this reality by any name you will. All these men found it. In your best moments you will find it too. That search and that discovery are the greatest experiences men know. Your life will be incomplete till you share them. "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in thee!"

PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION—II.*

Rev. Prof. W. Fearon Halliday.

The Freedom of the Soul.

In what sense are we free? We are not free to do anything we please: that is obvious. You and I cannot fly to the moon, whether we want to or not. We are not free in the sense that we can ever cease to be servants: we must be the servants of something. The question is, will we be the servants, the slaves of an ideal, or will we be the slaves of impulse? To be the slave of the ideal is to be free. To be determined by mere feeling, passion or emotion is to be determined by nature, driven on as by a torrent. To be determined by the ideal is to be determined by truth and love and reason. The will is only free when it is determined by the ideal, and the self is never free until it loves the ideal. That is why the truth shall make us free, because we were made for the truth.

That is one thing that a great deal of theology forgets. We were made for the truth. We were made in the image of God. Our real meaning and our real life are in the truth. The fact that that is so is proved because when we follow any other line we come to grief in the end: which shows that we were not made for what was wrong.

The will has to choose the means by which we attain an end, and the end we set before ourselves. The will is able to choose the means. We think with our minds free of various ways of doing this or that, and we can choose what we think is the best way towards the end we set before us. Our character is determined by the nature of the end for which we work. If that end is spiritual, if it is truth, as far as we understand it or see it, then our character develops in what is good. It strengthens always if our intention and motive and aim are good. But if our end is for self, we weaken, and weaken.

Often we think we know what determines our action, the cause of our action, while as a matter of fact we do not. Sometimes we do, sometimes we do not. We ministers find it difficult to know all the causes of our motives, because when we enter the ministry we unconsciously put on what is called the "ministerial persona" with our ordination. Many of you say: "I must not smoke. I must not go to theaters. I must not play cards. I must not laugh too much. I must walk with upright carriage down the street." It may all be conventionality, respectability. It is the idea of the minister that somebody outside has got. They are looking at you. And so you behave as a minister. All kinds of things we do are subtly determined by this conventionality, and it may not be our real self at all.

Let me illustrate!

A minister went to an analyst, and he said: "I have had a dream, such a funny one: I can't make it out. I dreamt I was going up a hill, and saw a sailor on the top of the hill, lying down, senseless. When I got there I found he had been prize-fighting. His face was all bruised into pulp. Just at that moment the sailor awoke, lifted himself in a drunken, senseless kind of way. I thought," said the minister, "I thought in my dream, 'He is a poor creature. When he gets better he will be prize-fighting again.' Then I woke. The next night I had another dream. I saw two hens fighting, and they went for one another, and you know how viciously hens fight. They

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* Northfield General Conference, 1925. To ministers, condensed.

Prof. Halliday is connected with the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, England.

just hold on, and go round and round and round, and pull and pull and pull. And these hens pulled until all the flesh was off their bones in one lump, and then the bones went for one another, and I awoke. Now," he said to this famous dream interpreter, "would you kindly tell me the meaning of those dreams?"

"Well," said the psychologist, "you were evidently repressing your indignation over some matter. Can you remember what happened before?"

"Oh, yes!" said the minister. "I had to write a letter to a young man who was deserving of a thorough good thrashing, but I sat down, and I thought, I will not do that: I will get at him by kindness. So I wrote a kind letter."

"Yes," said the psychologist, "and you were not honest to your real feelings when you wrote that kind letter, and you repressed your indignation so much that your indignation comes out in this dream of the prize-fighting sailor and the hens fighting to the death,—crude brutality,—because you gave an unreal softness to that letter. Now," he said, "let us go further. Of course, you thought that you were doing the Christian thing in writing that gentle letter. Supposing you had written a letter which represented your real feelings and your real judgment, and you had put some pep into it, what would this young man have done?"

"He would have shown it to all his friends in his swagger circle. They would have said, 'What a pretty Christian minister this is, to write like this!'"

"That's it," said the psychologist; "you see you were blinding yourself by reasoning that you were writing this gentle, Christ-like letter because it was the Christian thing to do. The fact is you were writing it because you were afraid of your ministerial reputation."

That was quite a revelation to that minister. He had no idea that that was his real motive.

Care for our ministerial respectability is one of the leading motives in a minister's life, and it is one of the most subtle dangers. For heaven's sake, let us be ourselves, and let us have that kind of self that can be itself; and if we have not, let us go to God continually until God through his grace makes us that way! Do not be mealy-mouthed when you ought to be strong!

There is a time when we have got to stand on our feet and tell the truth to another person's face, and say, "That is damnable hypocrisy," and to say to young men, "You are going to the devil!" We have got to call a spade a spade.

Oftentimes we are put off in what we do, and we give ourselves the idea that we have done something from the highest motives, when we have not. If you are arguing with other people you know jolly well when they are doing that kind of thing. How often we say that women will deceive us! They want a certain thing, and they will give a reason, but not the real reason. Men do that kind of thing, too: they do it subtly. The number of lies that are told in that kind of way is legion. We do not call them lies, but they are lies.

The power of determination is vital. The power of making your choice and putting all the strength of your being behind it is vital. There is nothing in psychology that I know of that in any degree takes away from the necessity of choice. If our determination, if our choice, is made in obedience to what is unselfishly thought to be right, our character is developed on right lines.

We must be careful, however, to keep an open mind, and to realize that it is wrong and dangerous not to keep an open mind. Otherwise, while wishing apparently what is right, we may tear ourselves asunder.

If you can only get people not to fear it, the power of iniquity will be largely taken away. Caution is good, but terror is bad. Anything you fear has power over you. If you can cease to fear it, you can deal with it. That is the case in all sports, all contests. It is the case with an audience: if you fear your audience, you are almost undone. It is the case in life. It is the case in the animal world. Fear paralyzes. We must face our fears if they are to be removed. There must be no cupboards into which we cannot go with God. This idea of cupboards and underground places where we have got to store the rubbish involves a cowardly retreat for life. We never know when it will be avenged on us. Real salvation is the coming of the Spirit

of truth into our nature, making our bodies, our spirits, his own.

We go further. Freedom in its largest sense,—not just freedom of the will, but the freedom of one's self,—is the union of the ideal and the feeling. In personality we have reason, we have will, and we have feeling. Our personality is free when these three are united. This can only be brought about by an object which enlists our affection and convinces our reason, and, therefore, draws out our whole personality.

In other words, so far from our being saved by fear, we will never be saved by anything but such a revelation of God as draws out the love and gratitude of our hearts,—our affectional nature,—and our sense of truth. Our sense of truth, our reason and our affection must be captured by God if we are to be saved. That is the gospel.

Further, no man is ever saved by an abstract formula. No man is ever saved by the creeds, however true. No man is ever saved by what is merely intellectual, any more than a man is ever saved by mere sentimental emotion. Sentimentality is always selfish. Sentiment may be right, but sentimentality that tries to capture an audience by telling stories about one's mother, and getting everybody to cry, is psychologically dreadful. It is not an appeal to the will. I am not talking about right feeling, which will bring real tears; but it must not just be that sickly, weak sentimentality. That has been the death of a great many ministries from the standpoint of reality.

But I must make this clear. Nothing merely intellectual, nothing merely feeling, is adequate for our salvation,—only that which is personal and which unites both intellect and feeling. What is salvation? Here I am. I see the Lord. He loves me, despite what I am. I have a new affection waking in my heart. That new affection displaces the old. To conquer you must replace, to conquer you must give an object for the affection which will defeat the wrong object and prevent the feeling going out in a wrong way. The feeling, the desire impulse that I spent on drink or on iniquity, that very feeling power, that force of my nature, I must turn and spend on him.

Ah, but he must be able to draw it! He must awaken my heart. He must make me see that he is what I want, that that is what I need. He must convince my reason. I must see through iniquity, that it is not worthwhile. It is a fool's game. The more I look at it, the more I see how illusory it is if I look and see, at the same time, how great and grand and wonderful he is.

That is the way Jesus takes us, that is the way he saves us when he really captures us.

There is another thing that is also true. We must live with him, and he must live with us if we are going to walk securely in the way of salvation. It is quite true that, in a sense, my victory may be accomplished today. Yes, but not my victory for tomorrow. It is quite true that I may never have certain temptations again, but let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!

We are saved because God comes to us, enlisting our affection and our reason, and because the Lord Jesus Christ is personally with us. If he is not personally with us tomorrow, it will be a poor look-out for us. If we love him we will make sure he is, and if we don't love him then nature is going to work in an earthy way, because not to love Jesus and that for which he stands means that we do not love what is spiritual, we do not love what is true, we do not love what is unselfish. If we really love the spiritual, the true and the unselfish, the moment we see his face we will say, "Yes, I am his!"

For salvation, two factors are needed, God and man: both are active, and the result is salvation. Work out your own salvation: it is God that worketh in you, to will and to do his good pleasure! God says, "Do not be frightened! Open your mind, open your heart, and with sincerity look at things in my presence, and I will lead you on and on unto the truth!"

Often the will is powerless because of conflicts in the unconscious. You have got two things in the unconscious, and there is a conflict between them, and the outcome is that you are full of unrest because of this conflict. It is that kind of thing which often causes drink. The elements of this conflict have to be made clear.

One scientist said to me: "I believe that

nine out of every ten cases of drink are cases of conflict in the unconscious, and that drink is taken as chloroform is taken, in order to still the struggle."

I will give you an illustration which will make it clear to you.

A doctor once said to me: "What am I to do, Mr. Halliday, about a certain case? He is a desperate drunkard, with a wife and two children. His wife is a fine woman, his children are lovely, but he is just broken down with drink. I sent him to a psychologist in London, and he said there must be something in his life, but I have not been able to get at it." The doctor said he had asked him, "Is there anything that has been troubling you? Anything that you remember in your life which greatly disturbed you?"

He said: "Yes, doctor, I will tell you, if you won't let my name ever be known." Then he added, "I was much in love with a girl, and we were engaged to be married for two years, when she jilted me."

Don't you see, the love for that girl was the great power of that man's nature from a physical side? She jilted him. He was dissatisfied. He never could get her out of his mind. She obsessed him. The ill result happened. Two or three years afterwards he married another girl, he had these children, his wife loved him, but he had gradually taken to drink. Why? Because the love for this first girl, this obsessive attachment, had never ceased. Nothing that he did in business, nothing in his home, nothing satisfied him, because the whole bent of his feeling was on another object. Drink was chloroforming him, it was the only thing that gave him ease.

The doctor said: "What am I to do?"

I said: "Like many doctors, you are too chary of saying you are a Christian man. You have got to try and save this patient, and you must take your coat off and go for him! Say to the man, 'I have the cause now. As a Christian man I am going to deal with you, for it is Christianity you need. The kind of love you had for the first girl was an animal love, because her character proved to be light, frivolous, selfish. Therefore, you do not really love her. Real love is called out by what is worthy of our trust. This is a physical obsession!'"

It would be good for us if we analyzed the kind of affection we have, and saw that our affection is set in the right place and is of the right kind.

I said: "Put that up to him! Put before him, also, that he has a wife who really is worthy of his love, and that, whether she is worthy or not, in the providence of God she is his wife, and his duty lies there, she has a right to his love. She has just as much right to be considered as he has, and therefore he should live for her, even though his own life is not worthwhile. He also should live for his children. Get him to accept himself, to accept the situation, to accept his wife, to accept his children, in the presence of God, whose will he accepts! The root of this whole trouble is that, like most people, he has been serving himself in everything, and what he called love was selfishness, and life was selfishness. It has all been selfishness. Let him get so sick of himself that he may get out of himself and accept his life from God!"

The doctor went for him, and that man has never drunk since. That is nearly four years ago. He stopped drinking at once. He has a happy home, and he is a Christian man.

Now, you see the kind of thing I mean. That man had to see the facts. Then he had to make a deliberate decision. He was never cured until he made that deliberate decision.

We are too apt to regard our feelings as things which we cannot change. We talk about falling in love. That is exactly what describes it in youth, but it ought not to describe it after you are 30 years of age. No man has ever loved rightly who "falls" in love after he is 30 years of age. He goes there quite willingly, because he also has got some perception of the nature of the soul of that other person besides physical attraction.

The older we grow the freer we should become, the more we should rest on our intuition of what is good and right and true. But this phrase, "falling in love," means, "I can't help my feelings, and if they get at me they fling me down." So we get the idea that we can never alter our feelings, and that therefore, if we don't just by chance love what is right, we cannot help it, and we must walk with what is right with solemn faces.

"Set your affections," says the Scripture, "on things above!" That does not mean on things in the other world. It means on things that are high and noble and true in this world, because it is all God's world, whether this or the next. This is not a damned world: it is God's world. That is why Christ came to save it.

We must set our affections on things above, and we can do so, because if there are things that are above, and we really will look at them and pay attention, they will disclose themselves to us as being good, worthy of our trust, worthy of our affection. We can really turn the channel of our feelings and set them on right things if we are only honest and open and true in God's sight.

The whole thing comes to this: there is no other name mentioned under heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved than the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, because he alone can enlist our affection and purify it, and at the same time appeal to the reason.

(To be continued.)

Architects' Model of Washington Cathedral.

THE GROWTH OF THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL:

An American Westminster Abbey.

The conception of "a House of Prayer for All People in the Capital of the Nation" goes back to the plans for the city of Washington drawn by Major l'Enfant under the direction of George Washington in 1791. This idea took more concrete form in 1869 when Mr. W. W. Corcoran offered an entire city block as a site if a million dollars would be raised to build a "National Cathedral of the Protestant Episcopal Church." A cathedral is so called from the bishop's cathedra, or chair.

No definite progress was made, however, until 1891, when a small group met at the home of Mr. Charles C. Glover in Washington. In 1893 Congress granted a charter to the Protestant Episcopal Cathedral Foundation for religious, educational and philanthropic purposes. In 1898 the site upon Mount Saint Alban was secured, a level plateau 400 feet above the Potomac. Since then, additional tracts of land have been obtained by gift and purchase, and today the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul owns

67½ acres on the most commanding site in the District of Columbia. The foundation stone of the Cathedral was laid in 1907, and the work begun on the Bethlehem Chapel in the following year. The National Cathedral School for Girls, now an institution of 250 students, was opened in 1900, and St. Alban's School for Boys opened in 1907.

Services are now held regularly in Bethlehem Chapel, where Woodrow Wilson and Admiral George Dewey are buried. Bishop Freeman's sermons on Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock are broadcast to a vast unseen radio congregation.

The work of building the Cathedral proper was begun under Bishop Satterlee, was continued by his successor, Bishop Harding, and is being pushed forward by Bishop Freeman. The Bethlehem Chapel was consecrated in 1919. Prior to the World War construction proceeded as fast as funds were secured. Following a period of inactivity during the war, the movement to complete the Cathedral at an early date was given new impetus with the coöperation and assistance of outstanding men in America. The Rt. Rev. Thomas F. Gailor, D. D., formerly presiding bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church, is the honorary president of the National Cathedral Foundation, Senator George Wharton Pepper, national chairman, Major General Grote Hutcheson, director general, and Secretary Andrew W. Mellon, treasurer.

In all, approximately $6,000,000 has been contributed by more than 8000 persons of all church affiliations and from all parts of the United States to the great Cathedral project. Of this sum approximately $4,000,000 came from Washington, a sum sufficient to build an adequate diocesan Cathedral. The Cathedral authorities pointed out that it would be neither possible or desirable for Washington to build alone a cathedral, which, as Bishop Manning in an address several years ago said, was to be "the parish church of the American people." Located in the capital, this great Gothic masterpiece rising on the heights of Mount Saint Alban is to be a cathedral for the nation, where the greatest preachers of the day will be called and where pronouncements of worldwide importance may be uttered.

In 1923, within the short space of one week the citizens of Washington contributed and pledged more than $1,000,000 of the $10,000,000 needed to complete the fabric of the Cathedral. The foundations are all laid, the apse is finished, the work has recently been completed bringing the construction up to the main floor level in the choir, both transepts and two bays of the nave. The next contract to be awarded will include the two transepts and the choir, to cost approximately $3,000,000. If the necessary funds are in hand or pledged, this work will be started soon. It is estimated that the Cathedral can be completed within ten years if the money is forthcoming.

The aim of the architects has been from the beginning not to copy and raise on American soil any particular cathedral of England or the Continent, but to design a cathedral in the purest form of Gothic architecture, that of the 14th century, the most beautiful, the most expressive, and the most distinctively Christian the world has ever seen.

Nor is it the plan to build the largest cathedral in America or in the world: rather it is the hope to build the most beautiful one.

The Cathedral will be 534 feet long and 215 feet wide at the transepts, with the great central tower rising to a height of 262 feet. There will be room for 5000 persons seated, and 22,000 standing.

The most striking and original feature of the exterior will be the West Front. Here the architects took suggestions from the impressive front of Peterboro' Cathedral, but radically modified and improved the design. The west towers of Peterboro' are insignificant turrets, and the central arch is the narrowest of the three. The Washington West Front, shown in our cover picture, has three lofty arches, the central one the broadest and highest set between the two towers, into which the other two open.

Certain "chapels" or alcoves are designed to receive memorials of great Americans and others deemed worthy of such honor: "brasses," tombs and effigies to commemorate great saints and heroes and historic events deemed worthy of such memorials.

In addition to the Cathedral itself, the two schools and the Bishop's House, which

are now completed, there will be within the Cathedral Close a large theological Library, one wing of which has been completed, a Deanery, an Administration Building, homes for retired clergy, the buildings for the College of Preachers, all to be enclosed by a great wall with twelve gates, named after the twelve apostles.

The College of Preachers, which is taking definite form under the direction of the Bishop Philip M. Rhinelander, will give inspiration and spiritual refreshment to specially selected clergymen throughout the country, and is expected to exert a far reaching influence. According to the pronouncement, men of great reputation who have won renown in scholarship and preaching will be secured. In addition this pronouncement states: "These men will be sent to various industrial and educational centers, to carry to masses of Americans, outside rather than inside the church, the fundamental principles of Christianity. Mass meetings, conferences, gatherings of all sorts will be held, in theaters and halls, in the great university stadia, in the highways and by-ways of great cities; everywhere and anywhere that men and women can be assembled to listen to their strong appeal for Christ and his religion."

It is in a spirit of broad and tolerant sympathy that Washington Cathedral appeals to American Christians for aid in completing the great church edifice now arising on the heights of Mount Saint Alban. It is intended to be not merely the throne-church of a diocese, but a national monument of Christian faith in the same sense as is Westminster Abbey in Great Britain,—a visible expression of the national faith, as well as a national repository for the mortal remains of great Americans without distinction of church affiliation.

The New York Cathedral is much the larger in all its dimensions. It is the French Gothic style, which is better adapted to its vast dimensions than the more intimate English Gothic. Both cathedrals are national in their appeal, but the appeal is local and at the same time more international in the case of the New York Cathedral, more broadly and more purely national in the case of the Washington church. New York is the city of great concourse of the nations, the portal through which the peoples of the world throng to our shores. This explains how and why its appeal can be both local and international. Washington is not an international city, but the capital of the American nation. The two cathedrals are in no sense rivals: they are, so to speak, sisters, and there is both room and work for both in a land by no means overstocked with great religious monuments. The ten millions asked for by the Washington Cathedral can be easily contributed by the richest nation on earth, which can afford to spend that sum many times over on skyscrapers, and this sum can be raised without in any way interfering with the raising of fifteen millions asked for by the New York Cathedral.

Editorial Correspondence.

My dear Will,

In January I am going, D. V., to Cincinnati, Ohio, to take the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church for five months, and also conduct a Friday night Bible School.

In this invitation my eldest son, "P. C.," is associated with me. He has already made a fine beginning in October, and will also remain with me from January to May. If during that time possibilities are realized which I think are there, the arrangement will automatically become a permanency for us.

The church is a small one, but right in the heart of the city, amid the hotels and business section: and it is empty. During this time I am also arranging to swing out for a number of short four-day conferences in cities within a night's reach of Cincinnati.

This arrangement will not at all interfere with our proposed visit to England next July. If I should decide to settle at Cincinnati, I shall return there in November, after my English trip.

As ever, I shall value more highly than I can say your continued coöperation in prayer.

I am, My dear Will,
Always sincerely yours,
(Signed) G. Campbell Morgan.

Australian Baptist Mission,
India.

Dear Sir:

May I thank you gratefully for continued receipt of the RECORD? After I have derived help and encouragement from each number it is put into circulation among the Bengali gentlemen of the type shown in this photo. These are proficient in English, and keenly interested in international affairs. Though still Hindu, they are in many cases

Staff of Bengali Language School for missionaries, Darjeeling.

greatly drawn to our Lord. In place of the usual tracts, the RECORD makes an effective appeal. It is, in fact, first class Christian propaganda.

This photo shows the staff of the Language School at which missionaries learn the Bengali vernacular. Three of these Bengali teachers are Christian.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) F. Hawkyard.

In Forthcoming Issues.

February Number—Efficiency and Equipment.
March—Bible Number.
Reopen the Bible and Let It Speak! by Dr. Robert E. Speer. (March)
The Power of the Gospel in a Moslem Land, by Bishop J. H. Linton of Persia.
Trophies of Grace, by Dan Crawford, Congo Belge.
How to Find Reality in Your Morning Devotions—III, The Holy Spirit, by Rev. Donald Carruthers.
The Gibraltar of the Moral Seas, by Rev. Grady D. Feagan.
Deepening One's Sense of God, and other addresses, by Rev. James Gordon Gilkey.
Making Love Real, and other Northfield addresses, by Rev. James Reid.
"Jesus Went about Doing Good," and other Northfield addresses, by Dr. John A. Hutton.
Psychology and Religion (continued), by Rev. Prof. W. Fearon Halliday.
The Bread of Life, and other Northfield addresses, by Rev. Melvin E. Trotter.
Ambassadors for Christ, by Rev. Charles Inglis.
Some Aspects of the Problem of Reading, by Rev. H. Gordon Ross.
Some Creative Beliefs: a series of Northfield addresses, by Dr. Harris E. Kirk.
The Essentials of Christian Experience, a series by Dr. John McDowell.
The Essential and the Non-essential in Religion, by Dr. Charles A. Dinsmore.
Christ's Challenge to Youth, by Dr. A. Ray Petty.
And Others.

Voices of the Great Creator.

A series of devotional articles by Rev. Albert D. Belden of England, beginning in January:

The Voice of the Mountain—Aspiration.
The Voice of the Valley—Duty.
The Voice of the Sea—Adventure.
The Voice of the Desert—Solitude.
The Voice of the Garden—Beauty.
The Voice of the City—Fellowship.

Gift Subscription Fund.

Contributions are invited to send this magazine free to missionaries, and in special cases. Many requests reach our office. Any sum, small or large, will be welcome.

19441..	$ 50	19466..	$ 2 00	19482..	$ 3 00
19451..	2 00	19467..	1 00	19483..	1 00
19452..	1 00	19468..	5 00	19484..	5 00
19453..	15 00	19469..	1 00	19485..	3 00
19454..	2 00	19470..	2 00	19486..	5 00
19455..	2 00	19471..	1 00	19487..	2 00
19456..	2 00	19472..	2 00	19488..	2 00
19457..	3 00	19473..	1 00	19489..	2 00
19458..	5 00	19474..	2 00	19490..	10 00
19459..	5 00	19475..	1 00	19491..	5 00
19460..	50	19476..	5 00	19492..	5 00
19461..	1 00	19477..	2 00	19493..	5 00
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19463..	1 00	19479..	2 00	19495..	5 00
19464..	2 00	19480..	2 00	19496..	5 00
19465..	5 00	19481..	5 00		

Your paper is much appreciated by us. When we finish reading it we pass it on to a soldier in the regiment here who understands English.—From Japan.

OUR BOOK TABLE.

Joan of Arc, Maid of France, by Albert Bigelow Paine. Macmillan Co., New York. Vol. I—367 pages; Vol. II—379 pages. Illustrated. $10.50.

It is a sad story, the story of Joan of Arc. Not even the Rehabilitation 25 years after her burning, nor yet her recent canonization, can overcome the intense tragedy of the treatment accorded this beautiful young character.

Mr. Paine tells the story agreeably. The book is well printed, and beautifully illustrated in gravure.

He tells us that he first became struck with the Maid of France 30 years ago. In preparation for this biography he spent over four years studying original and other sources of information, and in visiting every spot where Joan is thought to have set foot. The book offers the same full and leisurely detail. Joan herself and many witnesses are allowed to speak, often in the quaint original languages. Every known word and writing of Joan's is given in full. Such localities and landmarks as may still be identified are described, and often pictured.

You feel, then, as you read, that you are about as near to Joan as you will ever get, not as a church window saint, but as a human, lovable girl. The honesty of her purpose and the beauty of her character shine clear. No wonder they canonized the girl!

The reviewer was stationed in the Jeanne D'Arc country while with the A. E. F. in 1917-18. In traveling those ancient roads, in seeing the few peasant girls that remained, his mind and imagination often reverted to Jeanne and her visions and exploits. So it is a treat to read this book, which will be the final word for many a year on the historic record of her life. A close-up picture it is, as she was known by her neighbors and playmates, her comrades in arms and her accusers.

On Prayer.

Communion with the Spirit World, by Edward F. Garesche. Macmillan Co., New York. 159 pages. $1.50.

Written with the direct approval of the Roman Catholic church. The "communion" is the communion in prayer of the Romanist with his friends in the spirit world. To the non-Catholic it is a revelation of the extent to which prayers are offered to the dead. Perhaps the key is given in these sentences: "The church militant on earth is an arc in that mighty circle which joins in its great circumference the church suffering in purgatory and the church triumphant in heaven"; "It is the doctrine of the church that the saints hear us and help us," and the help given "is greater than if he asked some earthly friend for aid." Some saints have "more remarkable careers after death" than during their lives, marked by cures and help of all kinds given the living.

Such praying makes the unseen world real, but it is difficult to see how it can be of the same spiritual benefit as prayers to God in the name of Christ. It is essentially a different kind of praying. Our author tells us that when we see a Catholic kneeling in prayer we may be reasonably certain he is communing with some friend in heaven.—S. C. H.

Five Laws that Govern Prayer, by S. D. Gordon. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 95 pages. $1.

The laws of Need, Abiding, the Use of Jesus' Name, Skill or Practice, and of Confidence-Persistence. They are treated in Dr. Gordon's well known style.

Foure Birds of Noah's Arke, by Thomas Dekker. D. Appleton & Co., New York. 286 pages.

This facsimile reproduction of a work first published in 1609 is not a mere curiosity: it is a book of real prayers. Thomas Dekker was a playwright, and wrote in good English of the period, and in genuine devotional spirit. Indeed, his language has the dignity and style of the 16th century versions of the Bible.

The Foure Birds are the dove, the eagle, the pelican, and the phœnix. Their notes are changed to prayers appropriate to the nature of the birds. Thus, in Part I, the dove (comfort), there are 20 prayers to be used by the young, by prentices, men and maid servants, soldiers and sailors, and others in lowly life. Part II, the eagle (courage), contains 21 prayers for kings and queens, the nobility, the church, etc. Part III, the pelican (Christ the redeemer), has 10 prayers against various sins. Part IV, the phœnix (Christ risen), has five prayers of "Thanks and Wishes."

Fancy a dramatist in that age writing prayers for a prisoner, a galley slave, men who work in dangerous places like coal pits!

The book has received high praise from literary critics. One says, "There is probably no prayer book in the language from a single hand which can bear comparison with this for simplicity and beauty." It is in its way as much a marvel as "Pilgrim's Progress."

In a foreword Dekker defines prayer, saying: "Prayer, is the language in which we talk to God: for when we read (the Booke) God speaketh to us, but when we Pray, we speake to him: It is therefore a

dialogue between him and us. It is that ladder which Jacob saw ascending up to the clouds, for by the stairs of it do we climb up to heaven. Prayer is the key that opens all the gates of heaven. It is the compasse by which we saile thither. It is the badge by which a Christian is knowen that he serveth God. It is our best friend that speaketh to him in our behalfe. It is the eloquence that only overcommeth him. It is the musicke, that only charmes his anger to sleepe. It is our peace-maker, in the warres between God and us. It is the sword of defence in the combat betweene us and the devill. It is the ship, in which if our soul sailes not, we perish. It is the anchor, at which we lie safe in the stormes of death. It is the balme that cureth the wounds of povertie, of oppression, of imprisonment, of banishment, of despaire, of cares, of sorowes and of all calamities, that like diseases hang upon our life. Such is Prayer, such armor must we put on if we meane to winne Heaven."

Daily Readings.

Every Day, by Edgar Whittaker Work. George H. Doran Co., New York. 366 pages. $2 net.

A page for each day, containing a homily by the author, with a title and a text. Thus, for January 1 the title is "Every Day," and the text is Psalm 145. 2.

Dr. Work is a Presbyterian minister in New York.

Life's Beginnings: Wisdom and Counsel for Daily Guidance, compiled by F. J. N. and C. D. M. George H. Doran Co., New York. 376 pages. $1.75.

A page for each day, giving a text of Scripture, a bit of poetry, then three or four quotations like our "Selected Thoughts." The book measures 4 x 5¾ inches, and makes a fine book of its kind.

Bible Hero Stories.

David.

Moses.

Paul.

A new series of 32-page Bible story books for children. Each has a picture cover in colors, and about six full-page colored illustrations, which are original drawings, and are not bad. The type is large, the stories well done. The books look attractive.

They are written and illustrated by J. H. Shonkweiler, and published by the Standard Publishing Co., Cincinnati, O., at 18 cents each.

Fiction.

Quest: A Novel, by Katherine Newlin Burt. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston. 376 pages. $2.

An unpleasant book, even if rather cleverly written. Its leading characters are religious caricatures, exaggerated, unwholesome, repellent, cruel. The details of the plot are mean, and sensual wherever it is possible to drag in sensual allusion. This low-down level is maintained throughout.

Treading the Winepress, by Ralph Connor. George H. Doran Co., New York. 394 pages. $2 net.

Action starts in the first paragraph. It is a story primarily of Nova Scotia folk and setting, but the plot broadens and many other finely drawn characters come in. Then the war, with the hero finally captain of a sub-chaser, which was blown up in action. Captain Mackinroy somehow drifted ashore in Holland, but his memory was gone, and he was not identified for a couple of years. Then the tragedy of his return home after being mourned as dead for three years, to find his true love tied in a despairing loveless marriage to another.

It is a stirring tale in Connor's best style.

Biographical.

My Education and Religion, by George A. Gordon. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston. 342 pages, illustrated. $4.

In this autobiography Dr. Gordon tells us that "laughter is both recreative and redemptive." It certainly has had this double effect upon the author, who is what Dr. Henry Van Dyke recently said of another, "a young man of God."

In these pages we walk with Plato and Aristotle and many another worthy of old. We are friends with Phillips Brooks and many others of more modern times. We feel ourselves in the company of the best men and books, and are made happy by Dr. Gordon's generous praise of his friends and his kindly and often too just estimate of his enemies. We shudder at the "good old times" when Sunday was a horror, and we learn that the battle between the conservatives and liberals did not begin in this generation.

Dr. Gordon's religion is not one of theory, but of life and experience, and humor. There can be no conflict at all bitter between men who are both able to crack a joke, "but the sense of humor, if omitted from one's composition, causes the unhappy victim to take himself too seriously: which always means that he has a false estimate of himself and the world in which he lives." This sentence from Dr. Gordon's book will tell us much. "I was to discover that the Bible, in all its greater parts, speaks for itself; that it needs no theories to commend it to morally earnest men and women; that as a record of the highest human experience it makes an irresistible appeal; that its intrinsic worth and beauty are the ground of its permanent power over the mind and heart of man. I was further to discover that the Christianity of Jesus is an order of ideas filled with his purpose and life, and that these ideas are independent of all

ecclesiastical theology, old and new. Thus denuded of the traditional view of the Bible and of traditional theology, I was to prove by actual service whether I had or had not a gospel for my fellowmen."

In these days, when denominations are coming together, it is interesting to read Dr. Gordon's plea for competition, and the trouble is that one feels that his argument is true, though the reviewer, at least, refuses to accept the logical conclusion; but then, in another place Dr. Gordon tells us that logic is not everything.

A thoroughly readable book, in which Dr. Gordon tells many a good story that would help a man in making an after-dinner speech, shows everywhere that he is in touch with human nature, and points us to the good old earth at our feet as well as to the heaven of our future hopes. A book to read and to keep.—H. P.

Parson's Adventures (A), by G. W. McPherson. Yonkers Book Co., Yonkers, New York. $2.50 net.

A narrative of facts stranger than fiction. It tells of struggles in early life on a poor farm in Cape Breton, known in history by the landing of the Atlantic cable by Morse, by the first wireless station erected by Marconi, and by the home of Alexander Graham Bell.

The parson was one of a family of four daughters and six sons. Young men received 50 cents a day at labor, and there were few openings at that. Converted when young, the parson determined on an education, and went to the gold mines of Colorado to earn money. After many hardships as a tenderfoot, he started meetings, which drew down on him the persecution of the boys: but his Scottish blood refused to be intimidated. The president of the railroad, learning of the persecution, offered him a better job, and soon he came East and began his studies at Colgate University. When through college he went to New York, and opened the Tent Evangel, which he has kept in operation nearly 40 years. Thrilling incidents have occurred all through this work. —R. C.

Life and Letters of Sir William Robertson Nicoll, by T. H. Darlow. George H. Doran Co., New York. 475 pages, illustrated. $3.50.

It is no easy task to portray the character of a genius, yet this is the task which Mr. Darlow has achieved with skill. Not that the biography will satisfy all, for Sir William was so versatile and many-sided, and ofttimes showed such different sides, that he was known in various ways to different peoples. Just as the facets of a diamond catch a ray of light and reflect now one primitive color and then another, so Nicoll at one time appeared as evangelical theologian, again as astute party politician, and again as literary critic. His

S. D. Gordon. (See page 5.)

correspondence with Dr. James Denney and Marcus Dods reveals him as protagonist for conservatism in theology, with Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith as loyal party man, and with Sir James Barrie and Dr. John Watson as litterateur.

Born in 1851 in a humble Scotch parsonage, he might be said to have been cradled in the atmosphere of books. His father, although never enjoying a stipend of a thousand dollars a year, collected a library of over 17,000 books. It was, however, a selfish obsession, for as the biographer intimates, "it undoubtedly entailed privations on his children in early years. Their comforts were stinted to pay for the volumes he was continually buying, and they would have been better nourished if he had refrained from buying so many."

But undoubtedly the sacrifice of physical well being did provide means whereby Nicoll developed early in life the familiarity with literature for which he was famed even in student days. This he turned to good account, and by his pen worked his way in college as correspondent for several papers.

Like many a son of the manse, he looked to the ministry, but his career was of short duration, for he soon broke down from pulmonary weakness. It was thus that through what appeared as an incalculable misfortune he entered upon his journalistic career. That which cost him a Presbyterian pulpit in a remote Scotch town was the means whereby he responded to a worldwide platform of all denominations.

In 1884 he first formed his connexion with

What better gift than a good book at Christmas, New Year or birthday anniversary?

the London publishing house of Hodder & Stoughton, as editor of the "Expositor," which he continued to direct up to the time of his death, a period of 38 years. Two years later he added to his duties by assuming the editorship of the "British Weekly," the most influential weekly religious paper in the English language. It is probably in his connection with this journal that Sir William became most widely known, for its circulation is not only large in the British Isles, but it is read throughout the world. There are some papers whose circulation is not to be counted, but weighed. To this class the "British Weekly" has belonged for nearly 40 years.

An exceptionally retentive memory, with a facility in rapid reading and an immense capacity for work, gave Nicoll a vast resource from which to draw in his work. Together with this was a faculty for discovering talents in others, and spurring them to creative work. Barrie, Crockett and Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren), all acknowledged their indebtedness to his inspiration and encouragement.

It is characteristic of the Scot to be reserved. In this Sir William was true to national tradition. What he achieved and what he had of great talent Mr. Darlow has given. Now and then a mere glimpse is given of his character. But of the real man the biographer has not given us a portrayal. Perhaps in the selected letters one can judge best of a man, but one cannot but feel that however interesting the facts of his life may prove, he will remain the same illusive personality as of yore.—X.

Life of Henry B. Wright (The), by George Stewart, Jr. Association Press, New York. 250 pages, illustrated. $3.

Few men have exerted a wider influence upon the student life of the present generation than Henry B. Wright of Yale. It is true that some names have had greater prominence, but it is doubtful if in their relations with young men any have left so deep an impression.

Henry B. Wright was son of Prof. Henry Parks Wright, for many years dean of Yale College, who enjoyed great distinction not only as a scholar and Christian gentleman, but as the most beloved member of the faculty probably in the history of Yale College: many succeeding generations of senior students voted him the most popular professor. This was the more unusual in view of the fact that in him was vested the responsibility for the discipline of the undergraduate body.

His son Henry grew up in a home that was dominated by a simple evangelical faith. Early in life the devotion to duty was inculcated which influenced all his subsequent career. It incited him to conscientious effort in the pursuit of his studies, and in all his extra-curriculum activities, which were numerous. Duty actuated him in all his choices in life, and ultimately in his spiritual experience it was duty in seeking to conform his life unreservedly to the known will of God which was the secret of his religious life.

He inherited an exceptional mind. It was a tradition that his father had maintained the highest rank for scholarship of any man up to his time. This, combined with conscientious application to work, bespoke for Henry a high standing in scholarship, where he took rank among the first. Upon graduation he continued his courses of study in the graduate department, and upon taking his doctor's degree became an instructor in the undergraduate department of Yale College in Latin and in History. His interest in the religious life of the university received no diminution when he became a member of the faculty; and when in course of time he felt that greater scope for the exercise of his religious influence would be accorded him by accepting a chair in the theological seminary, where he could give himself entirely to religious work, he relinquished his position on the academic faculty to assume a chair in personal evangelism and Y. M. C. A. work.

In Henry Wright there was combined the thorough scholar of unusual intellectual gifts with the Puritan mystic. The biographer relates instances in which Prof. Wright, or, as the host of friends who knew him well familiarly called him, "Henry," would act upon what he felt to be a spiritual intuition, apparently in violence to all reason, often with the most extraordinary results. Especially was this illustrated in personal work, being led by extraordinary means to approach people in the matter of their personal relationship to Christ.

Otherworldliness, however, by no means made him indifferent to the interests of the young men whom he sought to serve. He took a keen interest in their recreation, as well as in their studies and social activities. In an interesting chapter Dr. Stewart describes the experiences in the work which Henry Wright did in the little village of Oakham, Mass., where he spent his summers. Here he organized the youth of the town in athletics, and provided for their social interests as well, with the result of spiritual quickening on the part of many a young man.

Dr. Stewart lived for some time in the home of Prof. Wright, and in spite of the difference in years their common interest in spiritual things made the intimacy of their relationship peculiarly close. It is this which has enabled Dr. Stewart to portray Henry Wright as a scholarly professor, religious leader and mystic, as no one else could have done.

Those who knew Henry Wright found in him a wise counselor and sympathetic

friend, faithful in reproof as well as in encouragement. It is the portraiture of a rare personality that Dr. Stewart has presented, of a man who will long be remembered by a host of friends with affectionate regard and veneration.—X.

Of Historical Interest.

History of Israel: Its Spiritual Significance, by David Barron. Morgan and Scott, London. 310 pages. 6/-.

Four passages of Scripture furnish material for a connected series of expositions, being interpreted as setting forth in continuous and systematic form the great fact of the self-manifestation of God in the history of the Jews. The passages are Deuteronomy 32—"The National Song of Israel: A Divine Forecast of the Whole History of the Jewish People"; Psalm 105—"Jehovah's Marvelous Works for His People"; Psalm 106—"Israel's Great Sin and Jehovah's Superabundant Grace"; Isaiah 51—"Look Unto the Rock Whence Ye were Hewn: The Grace and Power of God as Manifested in the History of Israel."

The verification in history of these forecasts is maintained, also the spiritual significance of Israel, and the lessons of comfort and warning it bears to Christian believers.

Who is better qualified by learning and spiritual experience to write on these themes than David Barron?

History of the Pharaohs (A): Volume I, The First Eleven Dynasties, by Arthur Weigall. E. P. Dutton and Co., New York. 328 pages, illustrated. $6.

The author is late inspector general of Antiquities for the government of Egypt. He shows the utmost familiarity with a wealth of Egyptian antiquities such as most of us do not know exists.

He claims to have hit upon a new way to solve the problem of ancient Egyptian chronology, which enables him to give the correct dates of the kings of the various dynasties from 5500 B. C. to 2111 B. C. He offers several checks on his solution, derived from existing material, all supporting his solution.

The matter is technical, and shows ready knowledge of known antiquities and the meanings of their inscriptions: and there is a frankness about it all which leads the reader to believe that the author knows what he is talking about, even when his dates and other details differ from those of other Egyptologists.

For the Bible student the main interest arrives in the last four pages, where the author anticipates Volume II by suggesting that the patriarch Abraham entered Egypt in 2112-1 B. C. He quotes an inscription which states that Asiatic herdsmen entered the Delta at that time because of famine elsewhere; also that Egypt passed through civil war and other woes; that the Asiatics were turned out of Egypt, etc. This the author thinks is parallel with the Biblical account of Abraham's trip down to Egypt in Genesis 12, fancifully interpreted. From other data he concludes that the story of Joseph as it concerns Egypt seems true to the inscriptions, and he proposes to show in Volume II that 1346 B. C. is the correct date of the Exodus.

Religion of the People of Israel (The), by Rudolf Kittel. Macmillan Co., New York. 229 pages. $1.75.

The fact that at the time of Israel's occupancy of the land of Canaan and for long thereafter it was true that "the Canaanite was then in the land," is taken as the basis of these studies. The attempt is made to discover and trace the effect of the religion of the Canaanites on the religion of Israel.

Regardless of approval or disapproval of the author's critical position, this earnest and sane presentation of certain facts, amply evident in the Scriptures themselves and in the archeology of Palestine, is interesting and illuminating to the student of the Old Testament.

Also it is significant that we find this statement: "Were Moses not an historical figure, another would have to be invented." And, again, at the close of the book, any fear that a consideration of such facts as those with which the author deals is necessarily destructive of belief either in Jesus or in the Old Testament itself, is shown to be baseless, for the author's closing word is:

"So we understand that he [Jesus] knew himself to be the One in whom the age was fulfilled. Whoever recognizes the justice of this claim will not hesitate to recognize that the Old Testament and the religious history of his people was like himself, God's own work."—W. O. S.

Various Themes.

Advent and Christmas Sermons by Representative Preachers, edited by Frederick J. North. George H. Doran Co., New York. 190 pages. $1.50 net.

Six Advent sermons and seven Christmas sermons by English and Scottish preachers. Among them are Dean Inge, Dr. Barnes (the modernist bishop of Birmingham), Dr. James Black, Dr. Morrison of Glasgow, and others known by their books on this side.

Kingdom of Heaven is Like . . . ., by Constance L. Maynard. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 189 pages. $1.25.

Miss Maynard gained her Moral Science Tripos in Cambridge University. Here she discusses in eight chapters within what

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A good book is a lasting token of friendship and good will.

limits the use of parables and analogies is legitimate and instructive in matters of religion, then she takes up a group of those parables themselves, including the sun, sunshine, the solar spectrum, bacteria, a germinating seed, electricity, the heaven known and unknown. She thinks our minds are biased as to these by the Bible, and hence we do not see nature fairly. So she would lead the reader to study the glorious messages of nature with a free and unburdened mind. Obviously this is something novel.

Liberal Christianity, by William Pierson Merrill. Macmillan Co., New York. 170 pages. $1.75.

A book that is likely to be widely read because of the prominent position of the author as pastor of one of the leading Presbyterian churches in New York. It is a defence of liberal Christianity as opposed to the fundamentalist or the authoritarian type, to use an expression that he prefers.

At the outset he complains that Prof. Machen in his book "Liberalism and Christianity" attacks liberalism as not being Christianity at all, and says, "If liberalism were in truth what Prof. Machen says it is, then he ought to fight it to the bitter end." Dr. Merrill falls into the same fault that he accuses Dr. Machen of: for if fundamentalism, or (to use a fairer term) historic evangelical Christianity, is what Dr. Merrill says it is, he and everybody else should fight it to the bitter end. The authoritarian Christianity that he describes may exist, but few have ever seen it.

It is a pity that Dr. Merrill should write as he has. It cannot be ignorance. On two or three occasions he even quotes the Westminster Confession in some of its most illuminating statements as supporting the liberal position, unmindful of the fact that these statements express the heart of the orthodox belief. The mental attitude is unfortunate: for if liberalism so overlaps and coincides with orthodox conservatism, why not emphasize the points of contact and seek to allay instead of stirring up more misunderstanding?

On two points Dr. Merrill takes his stand very emphatically with evangelicals. He insists that "God is personal." This, of course, is the heart of theism. He also repudiates any sympathy with humanitarianism, the faith that says, "We are saved by character." He "is as sure as his conservative brother that salvation is by faith, not by works." He denies that Unitarianism has any place in liberalism, yet it seems hardly possible that he would deny that many liberals are Unitarians.

Just what are the distinguishing marks of the liberal Christian? Dr. Merrill shows the distinction from the extreme fundamentalist, but the difference between his position and that of evangelical Christians generally is blurred. "There is a vagueness about the faith of a liberal Christian which makes it hard to express it in precise terms." In that sentence is summed up the reviewer's difficulty, as well as that of the listener in the pew. Dr. Merrill is a liberal, and there is a difference in his viewpoint, but what is it?

Fundamentally the authority of the Scriptures is impugned. He does not find the doctrine of the vicarious atonement in the New Testament in the form that the Protestant church has always thought was there. Again, he says about the person of Christ, "Christ is wholly and absolutely God," and then he adds, "God is personal, and man is personal. God is love. Christ is perfect love, personality at its highest. So the man Christ Jesus is God in human experience, God in man." Dr. Merrill certainly did not get this from the Bible. The Biblical record of the incarnation is vastly different, and Peter's confession is much clearer, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!"

One more example: Dr. Merrill's definition of salvation, with the emphasis on present possession rather than on the future state, is as follows: Salvation is the "joy of self-forgetfulness." This is not the Bible view, certainly not Christ's, judge of the world.

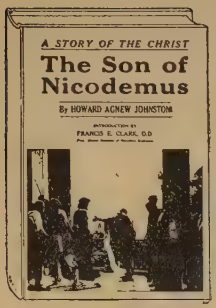
Taking the book as a whole, it is one that will increase, not allay, controversy. The liberals may accept it as a fine statement of their side of the case. The average evangelical reader will find himself in revolt against what will seem to him to be an unfair statement of the evangelical side of the question, and may find himself confused as to what the real issue is.—S. C. H.

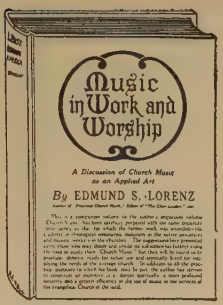
Purpose of God (The), As Seen in the Old Testament, by Claude Carson Taylor. Standard Publishing Co., Cincinnati, O. 294 pages. $1.75.

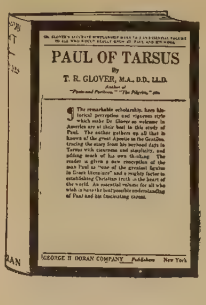
A book that frankly stands upon the authenticity and credibility of the Bible. The author is professor of Historical and Systematic Theology in the College of the Bible, Phillips University. His book is a restatement of conservative views on the contents of the O. T., with chapters on Revelation and Inspiration, and on Criticism.

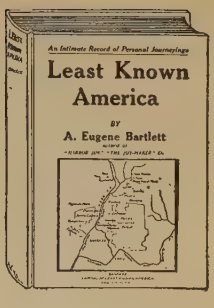
Healing Question (The), by Arno Clemens Gaebelein. "Our Hope," New York. 132 pages. $1.

An examination of the claims of faith-healing and divine-healing systems in the light of the Scriptures and history, by one who stands before the public as a trained Bible student and teacher. He combats extreme views at both ends of the question, quoting Scripture in support of all statements, and also seeking large support in experience.









Fundamentalism versus Modernism: A Layman's Viewpoint, by James W. Johnson. Century Co., New York. 52 pages. 50 cents.

We are not told who Mr. Johnson is, but he need not have told us that he doesn't know much of what he is talking about. Also, if he had practised what he preaches about the controversialists keeping quiet, this book need not have been published: for he is as dogmatic as any of them.

ALSO RECEIVED.

New Opal Black-face Self-Pronouncing Bible, King James Version. Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York.

This handsome new edition is pocket size, 6x4½ inches. It comes in various bindings. There are maps, and a blank "Presented to" page.

A California League of Youth: A Plan for the Organization of Young People's Work in the Local Church, by George T. Simons. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 86 pages. 40 cents and $1.

This result of study, experimentation and effort on the part of the Southern California Congregational Conference and a Conference Commission on Young People's Work composed of representative young people, pastors, and directors of religious education, presents a unified program of religious education for the young people of the church, worked out to the last detail. It includes the new purposes, the progressive educational methods, the use of modern equipment, and the spiritual forces of the day in which we live. The emphasis of the program is placed upon the development of a Christian way of living. It recognizes that the initiative in methods and organization must be taken by the local church, and that a spirit of tolerance and good will is necessary if the purposes of the program are to be realized.

From the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia.

Providing Funds for Church Buildings and Debts, by George R. Brauer. 45 pages. 30 cents.

A revised edition of a specialist's pamphlet telling how to go about the planning and erection and financing of a church building.

Qualifications for Membership in the Presbyterian Church, by J. Howard Nixon. 29 pages. 10 cents.

Teacher's Manual of Weekday Bible Lessons, compiled by John M. Somerndike. 154 pages. 50 cents.

Twenty-five "Bible Stories for the Teacher to Tell" cover the life of Christ, entirely free from sectarian bias and hence fitted for use in day schools,—the kind of thing everybody knows our young people should be grounded in. There are also some introductory items giving a list of memory texts and hymns, the names of the books of the Bible, Bible questions and answers, selected passages to be read at the opening of school, etc.

Building with Christ: Year Book of the Presbyterian Program for Young People, 1925-26. 64 pages. 30 cents.

Prepared for use among young people aged 18 to 23 by the different Presbyterian boards responsible for work among young people. This is one section of a complete five-year program that will extend from childhood to maturity.

The seven chapters give the programs for the young people's department of the Sunday school, Young People's Society, Westminster Guild, Young Men's Fellowship, etc.

Manual of the Presbyterian Program for Young People. 144 pages.

This seems to be a companion to the above. Part I deals with the program for young people, and Part II with the program in the organizations.

It is published in loose-leaf form, so that those who use it may have up-to-the-minute information as the book may need revision from time to time.

Heart of the Dream (The): A Service of Worship for Young People, by Helen L. Wilcox. 15 pages.

A combination of symbolism and realism. The leading character is the Dream. There are also a scientist, an artist, a business man, a welfare worker, and the Church. Also, a widow, her son and little girl. The place is the highway of life, the time the morning of life.

"Notes for Directors" tell about the setting, lighting, costumes, and music. The score for a motif and dirge are printed.

Plans for a Project for Young People's Groups.

A series of uniform pamphlets from the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, each about 64 pages long, with the same general outline of Contents,—Introduction, General Suggestions as to Organization, Specific Group Activities, Suggested Programs, Insuring Christian-Education Values, Reference and Source Material. Several pages are blank for Notes. Their titles are:

Young People and the Church.
Christian World-Builders.
Christian Young People and World-Friendship.
A Christian's Attitude toward the Press.
A Christian's Recreation.
A Christian's Lifework.

The books are decidedly one-sided. Little of the evangelical standpoint is to be seen either in the author's attitudes or in the numerous reference books on the Bible or service.

AMONG THE LATEST BOOKS.

According to St. John, by Lord Charnwood. Little, Brown & Co., Boston. 323 pages. $3.50 net.

Aim of Jesus Christ (The), by William Forbes Cooley. Macmillan Co., New York. 227 pages. $2.

Say it with books this Christmas and New Year!

American Peace Policy (An), by Kirby Page. George H. Doran Co., New York. 94 pages. 15 cents and $1.

Arnot of Africa, by Nigel B. M. Grahame. Doran. 59 pages, illustrated. 65 cents.

Christ and His Companions, by William Jennings Bryan. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 244 pages. $1.50.

Cyclopedia of Sermon Outlines for Special Days and Occasions, compiled and edited by G. B. Hallock. Doran. 325 pages. $3 net.

Elements of Pep (The), by William S. Sadler. American Health Book Concern, Chicago. 142 pages. $1.50 net.

Faith of a Worker, by L. P. Jacks. Doran. 128 pages. $1.25 net.

Five Portraits of Jesus (The), by W. M. Clow. Doran. 255 pages. $2.

Grace and Personality, by John Oman. Macmillan. 318 pages. $2.50.

Healing Question (The), by Arnold Clemens Gaebelein. "Our Hope," New York. 132 pages. $1.

Hymn Stories, by Elizabeth Colson. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 88 pages. $1.25.

In Christ's Stead, by Arthur John Gossip. Doran. 246 pages. $2.

Inescapable Christ (The), by Walter Russell Bowie. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 206 pages. $1.50.

Jesus in the First Gospel, by J. Alexander Findlay. Doran. 317 pages. $1.75 net.

Measure of a Man (The), by Arthur W. Spalding. 161 pages. $1.50 net.

Moffat of Africa, by Norman J. Davidson. Doran. 59 pages, illustrated. 65 cents net.

Mothers and Daughters, by Jessica G. Cosgrove. Doran. 118 pages. $1.50 net.

My Religion, by Emil G. Hirsch. Macmillan. 382 pages, with frontispiece. $5.

On the Mark! by Wade C. Smith. Revell. 159 pages. $1.25.

Our Children, by Catherine Booth-Clibborn. Doran. 148 pages, with frontispiece. $1 net.

Proceedings of the Seventh National Country Life Conference, 1924. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 216 pages, illustrated.

Psychology and the Church, by various writers. Macmillan. 203 pages. $1.50.

Reality in Worship, by Willard L. Sperry. Macmillan. 346 pages. $2.50 net.

Reasonableness of Christianity (The), by Douglas Clyde Macintosh. Scribner's. 203 pages. $1.50.

Science as Revelation, by John M. Watson. Macmillan. 303 pages, illustrated. $2.25.

Sharing in Creation, by W. Cosby Bell. Macmillan. 227 pages. $2.

St. Paul's Life of Christ, by Gwilym O. Griffith. Doran. 288 pages. $2 net.

Wooing of Rebekah (The), and Other Bible Plays, by Rosamond Kimball. Scribner's. 268 pages, illustrated. $2.50.

You Can Learn To Teach, by Margaret Slattery. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 223 pages. $1.35.

Best Sermons 1925, edited by Joseph Fort Newton. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York. 337 pages, $2.50.

Business Power through Psychology, by Edgar James Swift. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 397 pages. $3.

Christ's Soul-Searching Parables, by Louis Albert Banks. Revell. 187 pages. $1.50.

Everlasting Salvation, by Charles Forbes Taylor. Revell. 128 pages. $1.

Jesus of Nazareth: His Times, His Life and His Teaching, by Joseph Klausner. Macmillan. 434 pages. $4.50.

Later Evangelistic Sermons, by William Edward Biederwolf. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 125 pages. 25 and 75 cents.

Modern Missions on the Spanish Main, by W. Reginald Wheeler and Webster E. Browning. Westminster Press. 334 pages, illustrated. $2.50.

Music in Work and Worship, by Edmund S. Lorenz. Revell. 385 pages. $3.

Patmos Visions (The), by Philip Mauro. Hamilton Bros., Boston. 576 pages. $3.

Patrimony of Life, and Other Sermons (The), by Hobart D. McKeehan. Revell. 137 pages. $1.25.

Progress of Old Testament Prophecy (The), by W. J. Farley. Revell. 321 pages. $2.

Social Pathology, by Stuart A. Queen and Delbert M. Mann. Thomas Y. Crowell and Co., New York. 690 pages. $3.50 net.

What and Why Is Man, by Richard LaRue Swain. Macmillan. 339 pages. $1.75.

Any book acknowledged, reviewed, or advertised in this magazine will be forwarded postpaid by the publishers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK upon receipt of the advertised price. Remit by check, postal or express order.

Reconciliation and Reality.

The Bookstore, East Northfield, Mass., has imported some copies of Prof. W. Fearon Halliday's volume of the above title. It was recommended at the last August conference. $2.25, while they last.

Mr. Stebbins' "Reminiscences."

The evangelistic world of the past 50 years or more is called to life by the volume of reminiscences recently written by Mr. George C. Stebbins. For the last 20 years of D. L. Moody's career Mr. Stebbins was one of that group of evangelists and singers associated with Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey in campaigns all over this country and Great Britain: among whom may be named P. P. Bliss, Major Whittle, George F. Pentecost, James McGranahan, D. B. Towner. This is no formal tale, but Mr. Stebbins awakens memories by agreeable information and anecdotes that often give clear insight into the spiritual power vouchsafed to those leaders.

The book gives sketches of other leaders in gospel music who touched Mr. Stebbins' life, from Philip Phillips to E. O. Excell and Charles M. Alexander, and many a sidelight on the development of the composition and publication and use of the gospel song.

"Reminiscences and Gospel Hymn Stories" by George C. Stebbins is published at $3. It can be bought at this price from the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK, or in combination with a year's subscription to our magazine, new or renewal, for $4.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

January 3. The Son of God Becomes Man.

John 1. 1-18.

These verses are a Prologue or Introduction to John's Gospel. They indicate in simple yet profound language the mystical, philosophical character of the Gospel, and the kind of picture of Jesus Christ that John draws,—God and man in one person, deity manifested in a human being, God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. And remember, "These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in his name"!

The eternal Word, 1-5. Who Jesus of Nazareth was.

Logos (Word) was a familiar and significant term in Hebrew and Greek thought. John, living in Ephesus at the close of the first century, found the term and used it in his teaching. A word is the vehicle of communicating or revealing one's thought. It is a window into the speaker's mind and soul. "The Word" was the eternal, self-communicating God in relation to man. Jesus of Nazareth expressed and revealed God. He was the living Word.

These verses declare the relation of the Word to God,—eternal, a separate personality, yet one in substance, not two Gods; to creation,—implying the non-eternity of matter; to men,—their life and light; to darkness, moral and spiritual, which did not put out the light, overpower it.

Life and light are great words in John. The life is self-existent, original, the source from which all life has come. So the light is the source of all the light that mankind has, the light of nature so called, the light of revelation. If any man has light, it came from Christ. The place for light to shine is in darkness. Not until the light became incarnate did man understand it.

Believe these opening verses of John, and nothing that follows will stumble us!

The incarnate Word, 10-18. Why the only begotten Son came.

The perfect deity of verses 1 and 2 became perfect humanity (14). Faith and experience bridged the gulf which philosophy could not compass, and identified the Logos with a historic person. After verse 14 we read no more of the Logos, but of the person and career of Jesus of Nazareth, —human, yet divine; incarnate, yet having glory as of the only begotten of the Father, whom he revealed and interpreted to man.

Verses 11 and 12 relate the historic fact of his rejection in his own land and by his own folk, and declare how one becomes a child of God,—not by any human agency, but by receiving the divine nature as in a new birth as the result of faith.

And so, with a bit of John the Baptist's testimony and further comment by the writer, John brings his Prologue to a close. It opened "In the beginning," it closes "in the bosom of the Father," and between we have the mystery and the glory of the incarnation.

The Son of God became man that he might tell us how to become sons of God.

January 10. Five Men Believe on Jesus.

John 1. 19-51. Lesson portion, 35-49.

Who are the five? Look them up in a Bible dictionary, and learn all you can about them.

The Lamb of God, 36.

Picture the setting! John the Baptist is standing with a couple of his adherents. Jesus is walking about, not yet having begun his own public ministry. Scholars think it is subsequent to the temptation in the wilderness, and that John and Jesus may have talked things over. John is satisfied that Jesus is he for whom he was preparing the way. John gazes earnestly upon him, and repeats to his two followers what he had already said the day before (29), "Look, there is the lamb of God!"

What did he mean by "lamb of God"? What did his followers understand him to imply?

In the Mosaic dispensation the sins of an Israelite were expiated by the shedding of the blood of lambs: see, for instance, the daily sacrifices, Exodus 29. 38, 39; the paschal lamb, Exodus 12. 3-6. Did not John see the fulfilment of this typology in Jesus, who in his own death should take away the sin of the world? See Isaiah 53. 4-7; Hebrews 9. 11-15; 1 Peter 1. 19.

Such was John's designation of Jesus: and his follower John took up that title and used it repeatedly in the Book of Revelation.

Messiah, 41, 45.

After a prolonged interview with Jesus, Andrew was satisfied that he was Messiah.

A day or more later Philip was also satisfied that Jesus fulfilled those attributes of Messiah which the study of Scripture led him to look for.

Thus from personal communion and from the study of the Bible these men were persuaded of the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth.

Finding Jesus and finding others, 41, 43, 45.

"Find" is a keyword in this passage.

Andrew and Philip say, "We have found Messiah." That is the first step. There may be different avenues of approach, but salvation from sin depends upon personal contact with the Saviour.

Then Andrew "finds" Peter, Jesus "finds" Philip, Philip "finds" Nathanael. This second step should follow the first. Every seeker becomes a finder, and every finder should become a seeker of others, brother seeking brother, friend seeking friend. This is the aim and end of all Christian work.

How can a person become a follower of Jesus today? These first disciples became attached to Jesus personally before he had preached a sermon, or published a manifesto, or revealed himself or his mission. Creeds and theology have their place, but not as barriers between a sinner and the Saviour. But when you realize who Jesus was and what he did, you soon have a creed.

"What seek ye?" What is your purpose in following Christ? Unless a person is clear on this point, he cannot have a bright Christian experience.

No convert is too recent or too uninstructed to speak of Christ and introduce others to him. He can at least say, "Come and see!"

Has every scholar found Jesus as Saviour and Lord?

Does every scholar find his brother or friend and bring him to Lord Jesus?

January 17. Jesus and Nicodemus.

John 3. 1-17.

If there is one verse in the Bible that should be preserved if all else were lost, it is John 3. 16. Be sure that every scholar knows it by heart, and understands its great contents, in their personal bearing at least.

And while it is futile to compare one passage of Scripture with others in value and promise, there is perhaps no passage in the New Testament more fundamental than today's portion. The new birth, regeneration, is the gateway to all spiritual blessing, as physical birth is to physical life.

The teacher's difficulty will be to condense all that he might say and teach into a lucid, understandable lesson with practical applications.

Necessity of the new birth, 1-7.

Nicodemus represented the best religious standing of the world of his day. He was a punctilious worshiper of the true God within a God-revealed religious system. Yet it was to such an one that Lord Jesus said, "Except . . . .," "You must . . . ." If religion apart from Christ, morality, church membership, or anything else could save a man, our Lord would not have stressed the absolute necessity of the new birth.

In the physical realm there is no life without birth. The human language used by our Lord to convey spiritual truth means that there is no spiritual life without spiritual birth.

The Bible teaches that since the fall man is DEAD in trespasses and sins. Hence the necessity of regeneration to get spiritual LIFE. Do not fail to teach this dark background of our lesson, for without it your scholars will grow up without a true knowledge of their standing before God!

Man has no internal good germs which can be developed by education or culture, by reformation or evolution, so that he can grow up a child of God. He must be BORN ANEW, he must receive LIFE from outside.

Mystery and actuality of the new birth, 4-13.

An act or fact may be mysterious to human understanding while its results may be definite and practical. Physical life is mysterious at every point, and nowhere more so than at the impartation of life to dead matter, as in birth.

Our Lord looked to nature for an analogy. No one can fully explain the wind, yet any one can hoist his sail and enjoy the results achieved by the wind.

The inward change wrought by the Spirit of God in the impartation of the divine nature is proved by results that become visible in a person's life and character. The test lies in one's relation to Lord Jesus: the regenerated soul looks to him with grateful obedience as Saviour and Lord.

The new birth is not a mere theory or doctrine, but a fact, spiritual and physical.

Means of the new birth, 14-17.

Lord Jesus now turns to his Bible for an illustration.

As Moses lifted high the brazen serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21. 6-9), and those dying Israelites who had faith in God's promise, and looked, lived, so God lifted up his Son upon the cross, and whoever looks to him in faith receives eternal life.

There is thus a human and a divine side (so to speak,) to the glorious transaction. On the one side man puts himself in the right attitude to the uplifted Saviour: he believes on him. On the other side God the Spirit breathes new life from above.

Here we see the connection between the new birth and the atonement. The bright background of both is the love of God.

The best time to be born again is in youth.

It is hopeless to try to develop a saint out of a lost sinner.

Mystery should be no bar to belief and trust.

Have I been born again? What results do I manifest in my life?

January 24. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman.

John 4. Lesson portion, 13-26.

Many aspects of our Lord's character and actions and efficiency are to be seen in this episode, but transcendent importance attaches to the revelations he made concerning himself, his Father, sin, worship, the racial problem, etc.

It is to be observed that in his conversation with both the woman and the disciples he spoke on a spiritual plane, while they applied his words in material and carnal ways.

We see our Lord in human limitations,—wearied, hungry, thirsty,—and as God,—offering living water, declaring himself to be Messiah, seeking souls. There is a hint as to his personal appearance, for the woman recognized him as a Jew.

Our lesson portion begins at the point where our Lord is driving home to the woman's consciousness the fact of spiritual thirst. It ends with the plain statement that he himself is Messiah.

Giver of living water, 1-15.

"Living water" meant in everyday speech running spring water in contrast with cistern water. Spiritually it may mean the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is referred to several times in the Bible under the emblem of water; or that divine life which the individual soul receives in Jesus.

Grace opens up an inner fountain in the one who receives it, the gift of God, and he is no longer dependent on external sources of blessing and power.

The woman's interest and desire have been awakened, but she is still thinking in terms of daily drudgery.

A prophet, 16-19.

Our Lord now becomes very personal. He probes for her moral wretchedness,—type she was of too many a degraded woman in the Orient,—the point where her redemption must begin. Her conscience is touched, and she counters with a half-truth, a half-confession.

Messiah, 20-26.

For the fourth time the woman tries to change the subject. She swings off on to a controversial religious topic. Because she was open-souled,—like many wicked sinners always,—our Lord now tells her some of the deepest truths in all the Bible.

Verse 24 is one of the greatest verses in the Bible, a clearly put revelation of the nature of God.

As to worship, begin to read at verse 20. Verse 21 swept away the misunderstanding and bigotry of centuries, and set God before man as Father. God seeks worshipers (23) who worship him not in any set place or with any set ritual, but in spirit and in truth, because he is spirit and truth. Both worship and worshiper must be spiritual.

Worship "in spirit" may mean in the spirit of sonship received in Jesus; or in the Holy Spirit, in spiritual ways of thought and feeling inspired by him; or in the mind and heart, as opposed to mere external modes of worship.

Worship "in truth" may mean, again, worship in Jesus who is truth; in accordance with a correct understanding of God and his will. Moffatt translates it, "in reality."

"Shall never thirst"! What an announcement! How little realized!

Write on every earthly well, "Thirst again"!

The secret of perennial satisfaction is in the word "drinketh" (14). Keep on drinking and you will never feel thirst!

Does God find a true worshiper in you?

January 31. Jesus Feeds 5000 Men.

John 6. Lesson portion, 1-14.

One significant thing about this episode is that it is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Evidently it made a deep impression upon the thousands who were present and ate bread that never saw flour or fire: while the teaching that followed is no less striking.

Jesus and the multitude, 1-4.

It is now the era of our Lord's popularity. A vast multitude is following him, some because of the signs he had wrought, some on their way to the Feast of Passover at Jerusalem. We see the crowd following, fed, filled.

Testing the disciples' faith, 5-10.

Our Lord takes in the situation, he realizes that the crowd will be hungry before long. Luke says he was moved with compassion: which therefore is a motive to explain his actions. His consideration for their bodily needs leads him to plan to meet those needs. "He himself knew what he was going to do" (6), but he would test the disciples in doing it. He performed the miracle designedly, on his own initiation, and used it presently as basis for teaching on the bread of life.

So he addresses a question to Philip. Why Philip? Perhaps he was buyer or business manager for the party. Anyhow he was methodical, businesslike, and he proceeded to figure out how much food it would take to give that crowd even a scanty meal. But he left our Lord out of his count. That often happens with these business experts who apply business efficiency to church activities.

Then Andrew speaks up. Andrew has found a boy who brought his lunch with

him: but obviously that is hopeless as a supply.

Our Lord answers Andrew's question with action. Things must be done in an orderly way,—no crowding, no grabbing of food, no one overlooked.

The miracle, 11-13.

John says not a word about a miracle. Read verse 11 again! You would think our Lord had a trainload of loaves to distribute. He gave thanks, satisfied every one to the full, enjoined thrift by gathering up the left-over supplies. Abundance, but no waste!

'Twas seedtime when he blessed the bread,
'Twas harvest when he brake!

The effect, 14.

Having seen the sign, the people had the conviction that Jesus was the long expected prophet, and they were ready to carry him off and make him king.

Even a lad can help! Let Christ use you and your resources! He accepts whatever we bring, and increases its value and power. In his hands our little becomes enough.

Christ is not going to feed the world without our help and coöperation.

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS

ON THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

How Does God Show His Loving Care?

Luke 12. 6-8; 1 Peter 5. 7; Psalm 23. January 3.

A wealthy friend of an evangelist said to the latter as he was about to start off on a long journey: "You may need more money than you have. Here is my checkbook: take it along with you! The checks are signed, and you can fill out as many as you need."

Astonished, but greatly relieved, the evangelist took the book, and as he went from city to city mixing with some wealthy people, he said to himself:

"I have at my disposal all that my friend is worth!"

God showed his loving care and forethought by providing his children with his checkbook of exceeding great and precious promises, which all believers have at our disposal.

* * * * *

When W. T. Stead was asked to become editor of the "Pall Mall Gazette," we are told he consulted his friend Dean Church on the matter. On leaving the deanery Mr. Stead expressed his assurance that he would be divinely guided.

"I should feel swindled if I were not divinely guided," he said.

"Why so?" asked the dean.

"Because I read in Proverbs, 'In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.' I have acknowledged him, and I know I shall be directed."

Would Mr. Stead have been so sure of divine guidance if he had not made an open confession before men of his reliance upon God?

* * * * *

A little child, faltering and uncertain, was taking his first steps, laughing and crowing over it, the mother closely following him with outstretched arms surrounding but not touching him.

"He thinks he's doing it all alone," said the father.

"So he is!" said the mother. "I am not touching him. My arms are only so close that I can catch him if he falls."

This is a parable of the Christian life. Unseen, unfelt, the everlasting arms surround us, and we cannot fall beyond their loving care and upholding strength.

* * * * *

Po' lil brack sheep dat strayed away,
Done los' in de win' and de rain,
An de shepherd he say, "O hirelin,
Go fin' my sheep again!"

An de hirelin say, "O shepherd,
Dat sheep am brack an bad!"
But de shepherd he smile like dat lil brack sheep
Wuz de onliest lamb he had.

An de shepherd go out in de darkness,
Where de night wuz col' an bleak,
An dat lil brack sheep he fin' it,
An lay it agains' his cheek.

An de hirelin frown, "O shepherd,
Don't bring dat sheep to me!"
But de shepherd he smile, and he hol' it close,—
An dat lil brack sheep was—me!

How is National Prohibition Succeeding?

Proverbs 23, 29-32. January 10.

Mrs. Althea Quimby, president of Maine State W. C. T. U., after months of investigation says:

"The national prohibition teeth have cut the manufacture of whiskey in the U. S.; they have cut the consumption of alcoholics by 75 per cent; they have cut the doctor's bills, giving the nation the cleanest bill of health in its history; they have cut the number of alcoholics in our insane asylums

by two-thirds; they have cut the number cared for in our charitable and corrective institutions; they have cut the number of arrests for drunkenness; they have cut industrial accidents by 250,000 a year. National prohibition has teeth, and they cut."

* * * * *

David Lloyd George said after his visit to America that he did not meet a man who would vote for the return of the saloon. "Not only have the Americans carried prohibition, but no political party in America now dares propose abolition of prohibition. One hundred and ten million people do not continue to make fools of themselves for long. They are the most prosperous under the sun, not because they have gold, but because they have not the drink." Further, that prohibition in America was an experiment Great Britain should investigate. Last year England spent $1,580,000,000 on alcoholic liquor.

* * * * *

"Years ago," said Judge E. Y. Webb, of North Carolina, "I stood on historic King's Mountain and saw the smoke of 38 government distilleries. I saw no macadamized roads, scarcely a schoolhouse. I saw saloons everywhere. There were only two or three factories, giving employment to two or three hundred people. Some years after the people had driven out this curse, I stood in the same place. I found macadamized roads in almost every part of the county. I saw magnificent churches of almost every denomination. I found schoolhouses in every district of that county. There was not the smoke of a single distillery, but instead I saw the smoke of forty-three of the largest cotton factories in the United States."

* * * * *

John G. Cooper, United States Representative from Ohio, and a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, says: "I firmly believe that 95 per cent of the labor union officials would fight to prevent the return of the liquor traffic."

As long as the Ten Commandments are broken you may expect the prohibition law to be broken. So long as some men will murder, some will drink. But prohibition is no longer an experiment. Its laws are being enforced about as well as any other law.

The principal of a Brooklyn high school says: "Our pupils are better fed, better clothed, healthier, happier, and more teachable under prohibition."

Great Ideas That Have Spurred People to Action.

Isaiah 6. 1-8; 2 Samuel 7. 1-3. January 17.

Former Mayor William H. Thompson of Chicago said:

"Years ago when I played football in Chicago, and saw boys peering through every cranny to see the fun, I made up my mind to do something for those boys, and when I became mayor one of my first acts was to provide a playground for children. Believe me, I had to fight to put that ordinance through, and when I did I realized for the first time that the bigger your idea is, the harder you must push it!"

* * * * *

Florence Nightingale's first patient was a shepherd dog which some boys had hurt. When she was told that the dog's leg ought to be fomented she did not know what the word meant, but she found out, and cured the dog. We are told that while she was ministering to that dog she became infatuated with the idea of ministering to suffering humanity. That infatuation gave us "the Angel of the Crimean War."

* * * * *

Passing a simple mountain home, D. L. Moody saw two girls of school age braiding straw hats. After talking with them, and finding that they lacked school privileges, the purpose formed in his mind to found a school to help just such girls. Northfield Seminary for girls and Mount Hermon School for boys are the visible results of that purpose put in action.

* * * * *

A flower in Jacob Riis' buttonhole, given to a grimy street urchin, was the beginning of Richmond Hill Settlement in New York City. The next day he brought a whole bunch of flowers, and was followed by the children of the street till all were gone. It is recorded that with the gift of that first flower there came to Mr. Riis the idea that something ought to be done for these waifs of the street: and he did it!

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Between London and Cambridge, England, there is an obelisk that marks the spot where Thomas Clarkson, the philanthropist, got off his horse, and leaning against the saddle said:

"Slavery must come to an end!"

One lone man, with both political parties against him, regarded as a fanatic by the church, with only a few Quakers to back him, but with a big idea! What a spectacle! But this idea ended in an Act of Parliament—March 25, 1807—to abolish the slave trade in British dominions.

Why and How Should We Send Christianity to Latin America?

Jeremiah 31. 31-34. January 24.

The quality of Protestant Christians in Mexico is shown by this incident:

A young lady in Hermosillo had a watch that needed repairs. It was set with pre-

cious stones, and she feared to trust it to any of the jewelers. Some one said:

"I know where you can send it with perfect safety,—to the little Protestant!"

We should send missionaries to Mexico to produce Christians like the "little Protestant." The first need in all Latin countries is to remove prejudices against Protestantism.

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For 25 years the U. S. government, at great expense and with the most aggressive diligence, has labored to create an American public school system in Porto Rico. Some headway has been made, yet only half of the population of Porto Rico can read or write.

Throughout all Latin America, including our own possessions, ignorance and superstition are firmly holding the bulk of the population.

One of their catechisms, approved by the Archbishop of Santiago, says, "Why do you say that the doctrines taught by Protestants are unholy?" The answer is, "Because they counsel a person to sin as much as possible to make salvation the more sure; they say that the good works are rather a hindrance to entering heaven."

The time for instruction is at hand. Where are the teachers?

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The first Protestant Filipino clergyman was the son of a man who, many years ago, procured from a ship captain a copy of a Spanish Bible. When it was known that he possessed this Bible, he was arrested through the instigation of the priests, and without trial was sentenced to banishment on an island in the Mediterranean Sea. He did not return until after Manila was taken by the Americans.

When Methodist bishops visited Manila years after they found the son of this clergyman, a graduate of a Roman Catholic college, holding evangelistic services in seven different stations, with an average attendance of 600. He was ordained to the ministry by the Methodists.

Get the Bible into Latin America!

The Church: Its Calls, Its Claims, and Conquests.

Acts 13. 1-3; Hebrews 10. 24, 25; 1 Thessalonians 1. 1-10. January 31.

"Does Sarah belong to the church?" asked one lady of another regarding a mutual acquaintance.

"No," was the reply, "I shouldn't say Sarah belonged to the church. I know it is usual to say so, but it isn't fair to twist the meaning of words. Her time doesn't belong to the church, her friendships and desires and ambitions do not belong to it. If she does any church work she does it as a favor. If she gives anything she thinks she is generous. There is not an inch of Sarah that belongs to the church of Jesus Christ."

What an indictment against a church member! Yet all who are familiar with the calls and claims of the church know that Sarah stands not alone in her relations to the church.

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The purpose of the church, says an eminent divine, is to present the claims of Jesus Christ to the thought, heart and conscience of the people. Churches are not social, matrimonial or financial agencies, but religious institutions.

There is imminent danger of the calls of Christian institutionalism being substituted for real religion. The sooner Christians realize the divine mission of the church, the better it will be for both the church and the people.

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Rev. Robert C. Hallock, D. D., asks what would be the effect if all the space now used in the newspapers by ministers and churches to advertise pulpit themes and church music was used definitely and avowedly to advertise only Jesus Christ. He suggests that the impression too often made by catchy advertisements of pulpit themes is that some one is pushing himself, or pushing a denomination or an ecclesiastical specialty, instead of reverently and persistently exalting Christ.

SELECTED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

(*Learn a Text a Day.*)

JANUARY, 1926.

FRIDAY, 1st. *Be not ye afraid, ... remember the Lord! Nehemiah 4. 14.*

A bright New Year and a sunny track
Along an upward way,
And a song of praise on looking back
When the year has passed away,
And golden sheaves not small nor few,—
This is my New Year's wish for you!

SATURDAY, 2nd. *Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Psalm 144. 15.*

When you wish your neighbor "A Happy New Year"

Don't think that your duty is done!
A wish that is merely a word of cheer
Is a hollow and worthless one.
As you live by his side in the days to come,
You will find, if you are sincere,
A hundred chances will come to you
To give him a happy New Year.

—J. A. Pue-Gilchrist.

SUNDAY, 3rd. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God! 1 John 3. 2.*

In the eternity of God time has but one significance,—it is perpetually and unceasingly "Now."—G. Campbell Morgan.

MONDAY, 4th. *O ye Corinthians, ... our heart is enlarged! 2 Corinthians 6. 11.*

Hold fast to love! If men wound your heart, let them not sour or embitter it; let them not shut up or narrow it; let them only expand it more and more and be able to say with St. Paul, "Our heart is enlarged."—F. W. Robertson.

TUESDAY, 5th. *With lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Jeremiah 31. 3.*

The thunders of the law and the terrors of judgment are all used to bring us to Christ, but the final victory is effected by lovingkindness. What Moses with the tablets of stone could never do, Christ does with his pierced hand.—C. H. Spurgeon.

WEDNESDAY, 6th. *Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice. Psalm 55. 17.*

Prayer is a golden key which should open the morning and lock up the evening. —Bishop Hopkins.

THURSDAY, 7th. *Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you. John 14. 27.*

Every soul on its pilgrimage should have a Chamber of Peace. Set apart a room and time each day that Christ may cleanse your life, transform the commonplace, and give you his peace!—O. P. Gifford.

FRIDAY, 8th. *Abstain from every form of evil! 1 Thessalonians 5. 22.*

Do not debate the question of right or wrong! Never parley when there is doubt! There is always danger in the twilight zone. There is a way of safety,—"Abstain from every form of evil!" None has ever regretted a delayed decision in questionable matters of conduct.

SATURDAY, 9th. *The God of all comfort . . . . comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 2 Corinthians 1. 3, 4.*

No sorrow is too great to endure if it reveals to us some new beauty in Christ, or brings out in us some new feature of Christlikeness.—J. R. Miller.

SUNDAY, 10th. *And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. Acts 16. 5.*

Oh for a church that the world cannot treat with indifference!—Chappell.

MONDAY, 11th. *And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. Matthew 8. 24.*

How is it with your ship? Is it much tossed about? That is an inferior question as compared with the inquiry, Is Christ on board?—Joseph Parker.

TUESDAY, 12th. *After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God! Revelation 19. 1.*

What a day of rejoicing that will be
When unumbered millions come from land and sea
To gather at his feet,
All their sacrifice complete,
To praise his name through all eternity!

WEDNESDAY, 13th. *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Jeremiah 23. 23.*

That the Lord is simultaneously a God at hand and a God afar off expresses in prophetical language the fact that before God all distances fall away.—Abraham Kuyper.

THURSDAY, 14th. *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! Psalm 139. 23, 24.*

If we should all honestly make this prayer every day, there would be a good deal of change in our lives.—D. L. Moody.

FRIDAY, 15th. *A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Proverbs 18. 24.*

There is a kind of friend that never fails. Jesus was that kind of friend to those that trusted him; and he is still.

SATURDAY, 16th. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Jeremiah 31. 3.*

God's children often think, because they have a guilty conscience, that their Father is frowning upon them, and it keeps them at a distance. Christian, never doubt thy Father's love! Never allow any misgiving upon this point to rest upon thy soul! Fling back the doubts and misgivings with which the devil still would poison thy heart! God always has loved us, he never ceases to love us, and his love never changes.—J. J. Luce.

SUNDAY, 17th. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. Revelation 2. 17.*

It is possible to be a Christian anywhere. Pergamos was the place where Satan's seat was, and yet even in that city there was a Christian church concerning many of whose members the Lord could say that they had held fast to his name, and had not denied his faith. Christianity is not a thing of locality, but of character.—William M. Taylor.

MONDAY, 18th. *Bless the Lord, O my soul! Psalm 103. 1.*

Come, my soul, God bids thee join his choir! He makes room for thee. He would hear thy voice, not only in choruses, but in a solo. I can give to God a bit of music that none else can bring.—Mark Guy Pearse.

TUESDAY, 19th. *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him. Acts 10. 38.*

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of him whose holy work was "doing good":
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude!
—John G. Whittier.

WEDNESDAY, 20th. *I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men. 1 Timothy 2. 1.*

Are we as fully yielded to the Holy Spirit for this ministry of prayer as the Lord requires us to be? Are others suffering because we have failed to minister to them the blessings God gave us for them? —A. B. Simpson.

THURSDAY, 21st. *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! Luke 5. 8.*

A man stands erect until he sees the vision of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then he is afraid until he sees the value of the cross of Christ.—G. Campbell Morgan.

FRIDAY, 22nd. *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also! Matthew 6. 21.*

It does not take long to tell where a man's treasure is. In fifteen minutes' conversation with most men you can tell whether their treasures are on earth or in heaven.—D. L. Moody.

SATURDAY, 23rd. *And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. 2 Corinthians 10. 6.*

If we are praying for some soul to be brought into the obedience of Christ, or some opposing power to be defeated in another, let us see to it that there be no unfulfilled obedience on our part! It did not take God long to subdue Israel's enemies whenever their own obedience was fulfilled.—Mrs. T. H. Robertson.

SUNDAY, 24th. *For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ. 2 Corinthians 2. 15.*

A sweet savor of Christ! It does not consist so much in what we do as in our manner of doing it; not so much in our words or deeds as in an indefinable, sweetness, tenderness, courtesy, unselfishness, and desire to please others to their edification. It is the breath and fragrance of a life hidden with Christ in God, and deriving its aroma from fellowship with him. Wrap the habits of your soul in the sweet lavender of your Lord's character!—F. B. Meyer.

MONDAY, 25th. *Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today! Hebrews 3. 13.*

Make use of time, if thou valuest eternity! Yesterday cannot be recalled. Tomorrow cannot be assured. Today only is thine, which, if thou procrastinatest, thou losest; which loss is lost forever.—Jeremy Taylor.

TUESDAY, 26th. *While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. Genesis 8. 22.*

Earth's resting-time! Ah, yes, 'tis but a rest!
Sweetly doth nature sleep within earth's breast,
And from the frost and snow of winter's sway
God's hand will bring earth's resurrection day.
—Jennie Wilson-Howell.

WEDNESDAY, 27th. *I set my face . . . . to seek by prayer and supplications. Daniel 9. 3.*

Prayer is the strategical point which Satan watches. If he can succeed in causing us to neglect prayer, he has won; for where communion between God and his people is broken, the true source of life and power is cut off.—Andrew Murray.

THURSDAY, 28th. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night. Isaiah 26. 9.*

Sleeplessness is an apprehensive phenomenon that casts its shadow upon all of the next day; but it is an evil that leads either to sin or to glory according to the way in which our faith life spends such sleepless hours. If they are used to confirm our fellowship with God, they glorify the inner life of the soul.—Abraham Kuyper.

FRIDAY, 29th. *Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord! Psalm 31. 24.*

It is hope that saves us, it is prophecy that gives us all our music and higher cheer and nobler enthusiasm, it is the beyond that holds our home, and it will be the be-

yond eternities hence. To see the invisible is to live; to take hold of the eternal is to be safe forevermore.—Joseph Parker.

SATURDAY, 30th. *He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Psalm 40. 2.*

It is a great thing to be taken out of the miry clay, but it is a better thing not to fall into it.—R. R. Saillens.

SUNDAY, 31st. *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, ... and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it! Malachi 3. 10.*

If every member every week
Would set himself the Lord to seek,
And daily feed upon his Word
Until his inmost soul was stirred,
And see that faithful tithes were given,
God would pour blessings down from heaven.

—J. L. Spicer.

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS.

WHAT JESUS DID.

Rev. John Gardner, D. D., Riverside, Cal.

JANUARY, 1926.

Friday, 1st. John 1. 1-18.

We have been considering the thought of Jesus, and now turn our attention to his deeds as recorded in the Gospels. Every word of Jesus received its value because of the personality of him who uttered it. Every act of Jesus was a revelation of truth. The gospel centers in the person of Christ, and not in his words only, or in the works which he performed.

The prologue to John's Gospel emphasizes that Jesus was not simply an incident or event in time, but that he was eternally present and active in the thought of God. From the very beginning of things the motive of the Creator, the object toward which he was working, the reality to which all things else were contributory, the explanation of the reason for things and the significance of things, was the coming of Jesus Christ in the likeness of men and for men. In him the radiance of God shines forth, and through him men come to know the mind of God and the purpose for which they were called into being. That spiritual instinct which makes men yearn for fellowship with God and eternally dissatisfied if they do what is unworthy in the sight of God, has its explanation in the advent of the only begotten Son of God.

To understand Jesus, therefore, and also to know ourselves, we must watch him in his reactions to life. How did he learn about God and life? Whence did he obtain his awareness of the presence of the Father? How did he employ his time? What were his attitudes towards people and institutions? By what power did he master all forms of human ill? If he was just one of ourselves, we should know it: if there was in him something more than there is in us, his life should reveal it.

John believes that he was of us and yet vastly more than any or all of us. He believes that he was so essential a part of God that God would not be if Christ were not.

How can one who is essentially divine be at the same time essentially human? Mere argument will not settle this problem. We are dealing with ultimate reality, and if Christ is divine we shall discover his divinity in his acts.

The course of reading on which we are now entering demands reverence, candor, utter sincerity. We must avoid the tendency to establish existing theories, and to develop theories of our own, but simply look at the Master in his revealed life, asking, Who art thou? Whence camest thou?

Almighty God, we would worship thee! We crave the guidance of thy Holy Spirit, and that he may take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us! Help us to know ourselves in him! In his name. Amen.

Saturday, 2nd. Luke 2. 41-50.

A single sentence becomes the index to the life of his family. It was the habit of his parents to go each year to Jerusalem, and to take the boy with them. He was trusted by them, for when he was absent for several hours they did not worry about him.

Again, we see the characteristics of the boy in his presence in the Temple. He did not simply wander about in idle curiosity, gazing on the many wonderful things which were there. He found himself interested in the meetings of the great teachers, and even venturing to join in the discussions. By natural aptitude, by home training, he had become interested in religion, in the Scrip-

tures, in problems concerning the soul's relationship to God. His presence among the professors was not due to idle curiosity. He had a sense of doing what his Father would have him do: he was in his Father's house.

The picture of Jesus in the Temple and among the doctors of theology and of law is suggestive. It not only reveals the type of mind of Jesus, and the character of his home training, but the way in which great teachers went about their work. These men did not despise a boy. His questions were of interest, his way of looking at things was important, they were there to help him all in their power.

Ramsey has an interesting note on Jewish education. He says: "If the Jews were far behind the Greeks in some of the paths of intellectual and artistic attainment, they were far beyond them in the even more important paths of moral progress and national education. The lofty pride with which the Jew then looked down on the Gentile was not merely the result of ignorant bigotry: its strength lay in this, that the Jew stood both morally and intellectually on a far higher level than the Gentile. The Hebrew conception of a general national system of education was pitched on the same superior level. Only among them was the principle firmly grasped and boldly enunciated that the poor man's son has as much right to be educated up to his true capacity as the rich man's son, and that both alike should be taught to work."

O God, we thank thee for the heritage of wisdom and truth into which we were born! We thank thee for the Scriptures, for the manifestation of thy nature in Jesus, for the witness of thy Spirit in the world. Help us to walk in the light! In Christ's name. Amen.

Sunday, 3rd. Luke 2. 39, 40, 51, 52.

Luke dwelt near the times of Jesus. He tells us that he took particular pains to examine all that had been written, and to ascertain facts. Yet all that he could glean that was trustworthy concerning the early life of Jesus is summed up in the passage for yesterday and the verses we have chosen for today. We are left in ignorance as to his earlier occupation, his friendships, his habits of devotion and service. We can glean certain characteristics which must have developed with the years as we read the narratives of his ministry, but for the rest we must fill in the outline of these four verses.

We are told that his character developed, that he became possessed of a wisdom that was notable,—his wisdom was a growing and unfolding thing, "he advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." His advance was of the pioneering kind, that is to say, it was along original lines. He had knowledge of God and of manhood which was unique. He not merely inherited a faith or acquired a vision of God corresponding to the experience of prophets, he had an immediate knowledge of God and of humanity, different from anything hitherto known, and to be experienced by others only through his mediation.

The fact that Jesus lived in Nazareth carries with it a relationship to nature which must have profoundly influenced his thoughts. He must have been influenced, too, by the coming and going of divers people along the highways that led from the desert to the sea.

Again, Jesus grew up in subjection to his parents, and that means under the discipline of ordinary life.

Farrar says: "With the exception of these two verses, the Gospels preserve but one single word to throw light on the life of our Lord between his infancy and his baptism. That word is 'the carpenter' in Mark 6. 3; or in some MSS. 'the son of the carpenter.'"

Our Father, teach us to hallow the incidents of every day! May we learn not to despise our toil! Give us a love of work, a desire to do all to the glory of God! Make us wise, reverent, humble, true! May we please thee in all we undertake! Amen.

Monday, 4th. Luke 3. 21, 22.

The baptism of Jesus raises many important problems.

The fact which receives first place in the Gospels is that Jesus associated himself with the multitude who sought baptism at the hands of John. There are some who think that the form of expression used by Luke implies that after all the other people had been baptized Jesus stepped forward to be baptized, and that his baptism may have been semi-private: but I see no warrant for the suggestion.

A deeper point has to do with the nature of John's baptism. What did it signify? Did the baptism of Jesus identify him with the full meaning of it, and on his own behalf? Plummer says the baptism of John differed from "the washings prescribed by the law in these three respects: (1) They were acts of lustration, restoring a man to his normal condition; his was an act of preparation, leading a man to an entirely new condition. (2) The man Levitically unclean baptized himself, like Naaman in the Jordan; the penitents who came to John were baptized by him. (3) The legal washings merely cleansed from Levitical uncleanness; his was a symbol and seal of moral purification . . . . And while John's baptism differed from these Jewish rites on the one hand, so it differed from Christian baptism on the other. This difference was clearly pointed out by the Baptist himself: 'I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance . . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.'"

But of what could Jesus have repented? Some think the baptism was an initiation into the new covenant of the kingdom, and it was in this respect alone that Jesus accepted it. We have no warrant for any such restriction of the narrative.

To my own mind the baptism was accepted by Jesus with its full implications by a vicarious act in which he identified himself with our humanity.

Our Lord and our God, we pray for a clearer understanding of the wonderful condescension of our Master! He who was rich, for our sakes became poor. He who was on an equality with thee, emptied himself, and took the likeness of sinful flesh. Teach us the wonder of the love which led to such an act! May we love him! Amen.

Tuesday, 5th. Luke 3. 23.

The statement by Luke that Jesus was about thirty years of age when he began to preach raises some interesting problems. It becomes increasingly probable that Jesus was born about 7 B. C. Yet the date of the preaching of John is usually given as 28-29 A. D., and the baptism of Jesus in the latter year, his Galilean ministry beginning in 30 A. D. Irenæus says he was forty when he was crucified. We know that the crucifixion took place not earlier than 29 A. D.

What length are we to ascribe to our Lord's ministry? If we were to follow the incidents in the synoptic Gospels we might be restricted to eighteen months. But the events in John's Gospel require a longer period, certainly not less than three years. Headlam thinks the Galilean ministry requires not less than two years. Then there was the Judean ministry recorded by John, also the long tour through Tyre, Sidon and the Decapolis, leading to the transfiguration. Then a further period in the South, leading to the crucifixion.

It is interesting to notice the way in which the work of Jesus is introduced. He joins the throng of those who desire to consecrate themselves to the task of preparing for the coming kingdom of God. He girds himself for his task as a man who is bound to the past generations. Age after age is recorded, for the blood of his ancestors is in his veins. Yet he is essential to them. Without him their existence is meaningless. The race began in God, and if it is not to lose itself it must return to God. He is the way, the truth and the life, through him men find themselves back in the heart of the Father. And so we see this statement that in the prime of his life he came forth to work the works of God and to fulfil his will, to make known the acceptable year of our God and to give liberty to bound souls.

Our Father, we turn to thee as thou art revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord! In thee we drink of the water of life; through thee we find strength for our souls. Make us one with thyself! Cleanse us from all defilement of flesh and spirit! Amen.

Wednesday, 6th. Luke 4. 1-13.

Ross well says: "After excitement comes reaction; after the consciousness of strength, the testing of that strength in conflict; after self-commitment to a lifelong task, the responsibility of choosing the way in which that task shall be attempted." Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are. Although sinless, he must face the responsibility of choosing between motives and methods, and the choice constituted his battlefield.

We must not minimize the significance of the temptation of our Lord. We must not imagine that the more perfect our character the less severe our temptations. If we elect to do our lifework in the open, if we choose a political career, if we discover ourselves as possessed of miraculous powers, we must recognize the liability of self-assertion, of hasty methods, of doing things which will direct attention to ourselves. There will be the temptation to short cuts, to beating down opposition. These experiences are not in themselves sinful, but to surrender to them is to expose ourselves to hard moral battles. Jesus did not surrender, but even the choice of an alternate course took much spiritual conflict.

The weapons used by Christ in resisting and overcoming temptation are worthy of note. They are, first, a recognition of the supremacy of the spiritual. Not even bodily need must divorce the soul from its high allegiance. Second, reverence for God. Jesus could not give less than the utmost to the highest. His loyalty did not admit of any tampering with the solitary majesty of the Almighty. Third, testimony of Scripture. Jesus knew the true spiritual content even of the words which were quoted to feed his pride. He knew also the significance of other words which had come from the souls of men who had been taught of God.

The reading of Scripture may be a most perilous thing if we come to it in a literalistic frame of mind. Even godly men like Oliver Cromwell and Jonathan Edwards and John Calvin found themselves betrayed into cruel and unchristlike deeds by a literalistic view of Scripture. Jesus read with discernment, so he could detect the fallacy in the suggestion that he base his challenge to Jerusalem on a single verse out of the Psalms. Not that it was not true that God gave his angels charge concerning him, but that such charge did not warrant presumption.

Our Father, make us reverent, loyal, patient! Restrain us from presumptuous sins! Let them not have dominion over us! In Christ's name. Amen.

Thursday, 7th. John 1. 35-42.

Was Jesus for any length of time a

disciple of John the Baptist? John's Gospel seems to imply that there was a close relationship. Mark tells us that it was after John had been cast into prison that Jesus departed into Galilee. John bore witness to Jesus, and some of his disciples transferred their allegiance to Jesus. Peter said that the apostles must be men who had knowledge of Jesus from the time of John the Baptist.

Whether we are to look on this passage as referring to a time when Jesus and John the Baptist parted company, or not, it is a crucial moment in which John becomes aware of something in Jesus greater than what was in himself as a prophet of the Lord: and as he bears witness, two of his disciples transfer their allegiance. Does the question of Jesus simply mean an effort to relieve embarrassment, or is it a direct challenge to them as to their motives in turning from John and following him? I think it was the latter, and that their reply was a committal of themselves to his cause.

Anyhow, the beginnings of the work of Jesus lay in winning men one at a time, and taking them apart and speaking to them in such fashion that they became aware of his nature and office as the Messiah.

The method of Jesus was original, but it was sound: set a man at rest by answering the questions of his soul, then give him the task of finding another man and out of his own experience meeting a hidden craving in his brother. When Andrew's word had proved effective in bringing his brother to Jesus, the Master recognized both a need and a possibility. He saw the newcomer in all the possibilities of his nature, and yet at the same time he recognized that at the present moment he was far from perfect. This is part of the eternal secret of Christ. He challenges each man through his faith in the ultimate triumph of the good in that man's nature.

Almighty God, we gratefully acknowledge thy goodness to us in raising up messengers who call us to repentance and give us the vision and hope of a brighter day! We thank thee more for him through whom thou dost send spiritual quickening into our souls. Help us to receive the Spirit of Jesus Christ! In his name. Amen.

Friday, 8th. John 1. 43-51.

Jesus was now committed to his task, and openly sought disciples who would espouse his cause and become learners of his way of living. When he said, "Follow me," he meant a great deal more than simply espousing his cause. He meant that men should separate themselves from other things, from their allegiances and occupations, and give themselves up to the tasks which he should assign. He was the Messias, and whether he spoke openly of this or not, he lived in the consciousness of it, and he set about fulfilling the spiritual mission which he knew that the anointed of the Lord was sent into the world to perform.

The character of the men chosen by Jesus has to be judged by the fragmentary references to them which are contained in the Gospels. Philip is mentioned but seldom. He is the friend of a rare man of the name of Nathanael. When he finds his friend he makes a statement which is an index to his own mind, as well as to Nathanael. Evidently he and Nathanael were of the group who were waiting for the consolation of Israel. These men had been searching the Scriptures. Nathanael's statement about Nazareth implies that he found the suggestion of a man from Nazareth confusing. He expected the Messias from another region, and could not see how so obscure a place could possibly hide the Coming One. Philip, however, makes a retort which expresses the very genius of Christianity: the way to find out who and what Christ is is to come to him.

The greeting extended to Nathanael by Jesus implies the importance of his introduction. He was evidently a man well known for his genuineness of character and his loyalty to God. When the Master bore such generous tribute to his character, a tribute the like of which Jesus is not recorded to have borne to any other man, Nathanael shows his sincerity by seeking to evade any words of commendation. He does not like flattery. Jesus soon shows that it is not his way to flatter. His testimony is sincere. He has an insight into the profound experiences which come to a pure-minded servant of God. With that strange intuitive power which he possessed, and which made men marvel, he referred to a day in the life of Nathanael when a wondrous experience of God was vouchsafed to him, and from that moment spirit flew to spirit, and Jesus and Nathanael were bound together forever.

Our Father, make us worthy of the friendship of our Lord! Make us lovers of thy word! Teach us to live apart from the world, so that we may find ourselves in tune with thee! Give us consistency of character! Amen.

Saturday, 9th. John 2. 1-11.

In interpreting this story it is necessary that we bear in mind that John is deliberately writing a Gospel, and not a biography. He is trying to teach the people of Ephesus profound spiritual truths, and he takes this story for that purpose. It is not a mere incident in which Jesus wrought a wondrous thing, but the unfolding of a secret, namely, how life can regain its sparkle, its inspiration, its joy. There is always a better thing that we can find if we associate our lives with Jesus Christ. Life without Christ has a way of exhaust-

ing itself. We need more than commandment and ordinance, we need spiritual quickening: and this story is designed to emphasize that fact.

It is a sermon preached by a mystic who knows the secret springs of life. It is sometimes surmised that the marriage took place in the home of Mary, that she had left Nazareth and gone to live in Cana, and that this was a marriage of some member of her family. The principal servant, who was master of the feast, came to her with the report of the shortage of wine, and she referred the matter to her eldest son. Just what is meant by the words "They have no wine" is difficult to conjecture. Mary does not say the wine is almost gone, or the wine is exhausted, but they have none. It certainly looks as though John had taken hold of a story to emphasize the gospel of life as Christ imparts it.

I think Robinson is on the trail of the true interpretation of this and other incidents in this Gospel. A sign gives significance to something spiritual. Symbolism is meant to lead us to association with spiritual reality. Jesus incarnated in himself this high, pure, joyous life, and it was his mission to impart it to others.

O Lord our God, we are hungry and thirsty of soul, and we have no resources with which to purchase for ourselves that which will satisfy! Life is a vain thing. Come to our aid, we beseech thee, and help us to find those treasures of power and joy and energy which will make all things glad to us, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

Sunday, 10th. John 2. 12.

This simple verse is of great importance in understanding the life of Jesus. Apparently the family of Jesus moved to Capernaum, and during the two years or more which follow he spends much time there, or in the hills around the city. It was a city of rare privilege, and therefore of solemn responsibility, a responsibility to which it was not equal and for which failure it was doomed to a tragic end.

What was the precise relationship between Jesus and his brethren? There are some who assert that these people were cousins of Jesus, or children of Joseph by a former marriage, and not the children of Mary: but nothing is really gained by such suggestions. The Roman Catholics and some High Anglicans have been busy during modern days in formulating a doctrine about the sinlessness of Mary called "the immaculate conception." If rumor is true, they are now going to develop another doctrine about the sinlessness of Joseph! Where will they end?

Dods says: "Not only the disciples, some of whom had their homes on the lakeside, accompanied Jesus, but also his mother and his brothers. The manner in which the brothers are spoken of in connection with his mother suggests that he and they bore the same relation."

No objection to this interpretation would ever have been made had not men developed the worship of Mary and wished to think of her as eternally a virgin. Headlam apparently thinks that no other explanation than that they were the brothers and sisters of Jesus can honestly be held. "They played a not unimportant part in the early history of Christianity."

This verse tells us, then, that up to this time the ministry of Jesus had not completely severed him from his family, any more than it had severed the disciples from their families. He and they came and went as necessity arose.

Almighty God our Father, help us to associate thee with all the events of the day! Whatsoever our hands find to do, may we do it to thy glory! Make us strong in virtue, generous in judgment, loyal in profession, worthy of the name of Christ! Amen.

Monday, 11th. John 2. 13-22.

First we must picture the actual situation. The court of the Gentiles was an important part of the Temple, but the Jewish authorities had usurped the space for their own purposes of traffic in the means for the offering of sacrifices. How far the abuse had gone is to be discovered from the fact that Simeon, grandson of Hillel, tried to put a stop to the scandal by reducing the price permitted to be charged for a pair of doves from 366 cents to 8 cents. In other words, the coterie of ecclesiastical politicians who had a corner on the animals offered for sacrifice were gouging the worshipers, and especially the pilgrims who came up for the great festivals. Not only did they behave in such scandalous fashion with reference to the animals, but in the matter of exchange they cheated the people in the most unscrupulous fashion.

All of this exhibits a degradation of soul which was intolerable to Jesus. He saw covetousness in its most hideous form. He saw life reduced to the lowest morality. He saw corruption lifting its head in sight of the Holy of Holies. Such wickedness caused his soul to flame in holy wrath, and he started to rid the house of his Father of such vampires.

Jesus was challenged as to his authority, and he met the challenge by saying that if these supposed protectors of the house of God and the worship of God by their evil ways brought down the worship of Jehovah, and reduced the Temple to ruins, he, and those who shared his spirit, would build it again after a diviner pattern. They thought he was speaking of a material temple, whereas he was speaking of a spiritual temple: without the vision of which no

real temple of God can be erected in the earth.

This was the kind of impact Jesus made on his day. His works were strange because they were of the soul. Each of them was symbolical of spiritual and eternal things.

Our God and Father, save us from undue familiarity with holy things! In our service to thee and thy house may we ever have reverent hearts! Make us sincere in our worship and in our service! Amen.

Tuesday, 12th. John 2. 23 to 3. 1.

The work of Jesus startled the people into a recognition of the presence of God in their midst. We throw emphasis on the miracles, John lays emphasis on that which they symbolized. It was the consciousness that his acts meant more than mere deeds of wonder that arrested men and commanded their faith. Yet Jesus was aware that a recognition due to sudden emotion was liable to be affected by popular opinion. It was not rooted in conviction. And so he was careful not to allow himself to be swept into a Messianic campaign by a wave of popularity. He understood men and their fickleness, and therefore he permitted his movements to be controlled only by the consciousness of the times which God had appointed.

Among those who were swayed by the popular movement was Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, that is to say, a member of the Sanhedrin. This man knew the official action of the Sanhedrin, yet felt there must be more in Jesus than their prejudices would admit. He felt that a man capable of doing such works and exercising such a ministry must be a God-endowed personality like one of the prophets, and so he came to learn what Jesus knew about God. So Jesus discusses with this old man the problem of making a fresh start in life. He says there is another and higher realm of being than that which takes its rise in the impulses of the flesh. The realm of spirit in man is capable of quickening. Indeed, there is no higher life which does not begin in this realm.

Such teaching is not easy to understand. Jesus has to go over it with Nicodemus: to shew him that there is something more than what could be accomplished by a water baptism such as John the Baptist practised. If there is nothing beyond what comes through the operation of bodily functions, then the life of man ends with his bodily functions: but if there is a higher realm, a world of thought, volition, ethics, spiritual life, then quickening in this sphere means the development of new capacities which death of the body cannot destroy. So Jesus makes his appeal and unfolds his gospel.

O Lord our God, teach us the mysteries of the spiritual world! Quicken us in the higher regions of being! Help us to walk in the light as thou art in the light! Through Christ may we receive light and life! In his name. Amen.

Wednesday, 13th. John 3. 22; 4. 1, 2.

These passages need to be read together. Jesus may have baptized some people without making a practice of doing so, but I think that the whole passage means that Jesus sanctioned the work of his disciples in baptizing although he himself refrained from baptizing men.

What are we to understand by this? Did the disciples mean anything more by their baptizing than John the Baptist meant? Was not their baptism of a different character from that which became the practice of the Christian church after the resurrection of Christ? John's baptism was anticipatory of the revelation of the Messias. He expected Christ to supersede his baptism by water with that by the Holy Spirit. Did the disciples at this time mean any more than initiation into the Messianic age? Apart from this one reference the disciples do not seem to have thought of baptism until after Jesus had left the grave and given them a commission so to do.

I find it difficult to reconcile these verses, or to explain the problem. The special function of Jesus was the gift of the Spirit of God. His gospel of life is a gospel of the spirit.

Apparently the disciples of John attached great importance to external rites, and were jealous of anyone who seemed to mar the solitary significance of the work they were doing in their master's name. Jesus stood for precisely the opposite things from those they were emphasizing.

It may be that what we are to understand by this passage is that for a time the sphere in which Jesus worked, and the character of his work, corresponded with that of John, but after the incident here referred to Jesus felt that he did not want to appear to be a rival of John, or, indeed, to be compromised at all by the similarity of his methods with those of John, and so he withdrew from Judea and the Jordan Valley, and went back to Galilee, there to carry forward his spiritual and Messianic work without embarrassment or misunderstanding.

Our Father, teach us to rejoice in the work which others are doing! Even if their ways or ideas are not always like our own, if their hearts are right may we rejoice because through them Christ is preached! Give us a large-hearted charity, also make us loyal to the truth as we see it! Amen.

Thursday, 14th. John 4. 4-26.

It is interesting to notice the kind of themes chosen by John to illustrate the gospel. He speaks of marriage feasts, of being born, and of water. In such a country water is a most imperative need. A man cannot build a home or go on a journey without

asking which way will make him certain of finding water. So when Jesus stays outside Sychar, weary and exhausted by his labors, that of which he stands in need is water: and when he begins to enter into the life of this woman in order to help her, he uses water as the symbol of her soul's craving, which has urged her on, even when she has lost herself.

Robinson says: "John does not leave his story suspended in the air, as far as place and scene are concerned. Jesus was near a city of Samaria called Sychar. Sychar was near Jacob's spring, and near the pasture ground given to Joseph. Thus the author humanizes his narrative with living facts and atmosphere rather than with what we would have called dry geographical data. By a fortunate accident of history Jacob's well has been preserved, and has been identified beyond question today. It is over 100 feet deep. But our author's interest was engrossed in giving vividness and definiteness to his narrative for those who would never visit Palestine, nor ever see a map of that country."

Jesus believes that men's souls are craving satisfaction, their needs are real, they find life a wearisome pilgrimage, full of hazard and distress until they discover water. He believes that life was meant to possess the perennial freshness of youth. So he tries to open to men the fair vision of joyous, exuberant living in fellowship with the eternal. To do his work he must establish relationships of real candor, in which it is known that he is aware of our past, with its shame as well as its sorrow. Then he can lead us to true ideas about God, and his attitude toward us.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we rejoice in the love that prompts thee to come to our aid! We pray that we may come to an understanding of ourselves. Open our hearts to the invasion of thy Spirit! Purify our affections and desires! Give us clean hearts and contrite spirits! In Christ's name. Amen.

Friday, 15th. John 4. 43-45.

Human nature is a strange and fickle thing. The very people who at the outset of Christ's ministry would not tolerate him, necessitating his going away in order to do his mighty works, are the first to greet when he has become famous. They are proud of a man who could make the rulers and the people of Judea take notice of his message and work.

John's Gospel seems to be much more interested in the work of Jesus in Jerusalem and Judea than in the North, and for various reasons. The events which happened in Judea were important because it was there that Jesus met the rulers and presented his challenge. It was because of what happened there that he was put to death. Jerusalem was the center of national and religious life, and as the Messiah Jesus appeared before his people, demanding their allegiance. His own country was indeed Jerusalem and Judea. And yet it is true that every word of the Master as recorded here is intended to illustrate some aspect of the gospel appeal. The maxim has universal application: the people who ought to be most appreciative and responsive are often the most dull-witted when it comes to their appreciation of a prophet of God.

Another aspect of the experience of Jesus is deserving of attention. Men are slow to appreciate what a man is in himself, but if he does anything startling, and so acquires fame, then they are ready enough to identify themselves and to talk enthusiastically about his notoriety. It behooves us to recognize this trait of human nature, and to defend ourselves against it. We may use the popularity while it lasts in order to try to help others into rest and peace, but let us not deceive ourselves! It is our fame that interests people, and not we ourselves, and if we pass under a cloud they will drop us just as swiftly. Some years ago a famous preacher occupied my pulpit. He was tired and nervous, and did not deliver his message with his accustomed force. At once I heard remarks about his power having vanished. It had not vanished, and if it had, people ought to have loved him for what he had done and what he was in himself. But they do not so: and this was to be the experience of Jesus, as later it was the experience of Paul.

O God, make us faithful in our calling as thy servants! May we know that thou art constant in thy regard! Men heed us, love us, honor us not, but thou art true and just and faithful. Thou hast thy book of remembrance always open. May we trust thee, and not be discouraged! Amen.

Saturday, 16th. Luke 4. 14, 15; Mark 1. 14, 15.

It is not easy to arrange the chronological sequence of our Lord's ministry. The synoptists do not seem to have any knowledge of the Judean ministry. As a matter of fact, not one of the evangelists had in mind the writing of a life of Christ: he was writing a Gospel or a handbook for the guidance of teachers and preachers, and so gathered together a series of facts and sayings to develop his purpose. In one case the object is the development of the authority of Jesus, and the reaction of men to his claims. In another the idea is to develop the fact that Jesus belongs to the whole world. In another there is an attempt to present the gospel in the light of the challenge of philosophies and cults and religions which men have developed to meet the soul's need, which had proved themselves lacking in power or in lifting

energy, either social or ethical. It is for us to try to disentangle the incidents and to arrange them so as to give us a record of the sequence of events. So I think that the passages which we are reading today should be placed between John 4. 45 and 46.

In this case we see Jesus transferring his work from the Jordan Valley to the synagogues. How long he continues we do not know, but it cannot have been for many weeks, for soon the synagogue of Nazareth was closed against him, and he had to resort to the mountains, or the Lake, or the desert. The people had opportunity to see and hear for themselves. Many of them marvelled, for there was an authority, originality, spirituality and directness about his preaching which disturbed them. He spoke in the power of the Spirit with a quality which marked him out as being in contact with the divine. His claim was to be a teacher of his nation, and he maintained this office till the end. Even when expelled from the synagogues, he continued to fulfil his appointed task. Private homes were open, and there were the free spaces of God.

Our Father, make us worthy to be members of thy kingdom! Grant unto us the aid of thy Spirit that we may be made righteous, joyous, peaceful! Anoint us with power that we may bear worthy testimony to the gospel which thou hast made known in Christ! Amen.

Sunday, 17th. John 4. 46-54.

Men have always evinced a keener interest in wonder stories than in truth by which they may order their lives. It was at the time when Jesus found himself most popular as a worker of miracles that he discovered his inability to make men understand his teaching. Indeed, so hopeless was it that he practically tried to avoid teaching the crowds, and concentrated on teaching his disciples. Even with them he had many trying hours, and after long effort he had to cry, "Do not ye understand? . . . . Do you not remember? How sayest thou, Show us the Father?" Even when he resorted to the method of teaching by parables because of the use being made by his enemies of his more direct forms of speech, he had to take his disciples apart and explain the inner meaning of the stories, and answer questions arising out of his explanations.

John is sparing in his references to the miracles of Jesus, and such as he does record are used because of the light they throw on the personality of Jesus, and the secret of eternal life which he came to disclose. In this case he tells a story to illustrate the nature of the faith which appropriates the gift of life. The nobleman comes stimulated by the reports which have reached him that Jesus has developed strange, God-given powers of healing. He craves their exercise on behalf of his boy. He fancied that it would be necessary for Jesus to come to his home in order to work the cure. His faith was of a crude description, as indeed is most of our faith today. Jesus makes it a real and deep thing. Instead of going with the man, he gives him the assurance that the boy is well. Now what will the suppliant do? Will he argue? Will he ask for proof? Or will he accept the word Jesus utters and go his way with eager anticipation? This is what he does: and arrival at his home turns trust into joy.

Meyer says there are three conditions for the faith that can claim all that God is ready to give: It must be associated with a good conscience, it must feed on the promises of God, it must dare to act in the absence of emotion.

Our Father, help us to believe that nothing is too hard for thee! When we bring to thee our sorrows, our cares, our doubts and forebodings, our stricken consciences, may we believe in thy love, thy willingness to forgive, thy power to deliver! Amen.

Monday, 18th. Mark 6. 1-6.

Hausrath says: "That Jesus did in fact spring from the laboring classes of the population is confirmed by the language of his discourses and parables, which everywhere refer to the antecedents and relations of the ordinary workman's life, and betray a knowledge of it which no one could have gained merely by observation. He was at home in those poor, windowless Syrian hovels, in which the housewife had to light a candle in the daytime to seek for her lost piece of silver. He was acquainted with the secrets of the baker, the gardener, and the builder, and with things which the upper classes never see, as the good measure pressed down and shaken together and running over of the corn chandler, the rotten, leaking wineskin of the winedealer, the patchwork of the peasant woman, the brutal manners of the upper servants to the lower,—these and a hundred features of a similar kind are interwoven by him into his parables. Reminiscences even of his more special handicraft have been found, it is believed, in his sayings. The parable of the splinter and the beam is said to recall the carpenter's shop; the uneven foundations of the houses, the building yard; the cubit which is added, the workshop; and the distinction in the appearance of the green and dry wood, the drying shed."

The story tells us that the experience which Jesus had had in Judea was now repeated in his own city, and the people who had at one time heard him gladly now became incensed against him. His words had a startling effect, and the authority with which he uttered them, as well as commanded the forces of evil to depart, roused

first their astonishment and then their criticism. They began to assert that one so lowly and limited in opportunity could not possibly have the right to instruct them and to direct their conduct. Mark emphasizes the amazement of the people, Luke tells of their fury. They began to be scandalized, and so turned from him, and made it impossible for him to continue his work along ordinary lines.

The action of the people of Nazareth did certain things. It showed a side of Jesus' life which otherwise we should scarcely have guessed. It showed he had lived, toiled, struggled, engaged in the ordinary enterprises of life which belong to genuine human beings. It showed, also, that now there was something about him, in wisdom and power as a teacher, in ability to work miracles, which made him extraordinary. They closed their minds against him, but that did not remove the problem. So it is today. Whether we accept Christ or not, his power and influence is the most stupendous fact in the world, and we cannot remove it by a closed mind.

O God, help us to bear the misunderstandings and hardships of life as thy sons and daughters! Make us true and loyal in all things! In Christ's name. Amen.

Tuesday, 19th. Matthew 4. 13-16.

This simple passage tells us what after all is a tragic thing, the turning away of a man from his own townsfolk and taking up his abode elsewhere.

The transfer to Capernaum reminded Matthew of light, and he goes back to the Old Testament to find poetry adequate to explain the wonder and significance of the event. And why? Because this coming to Capernaum meant, among other things, that Jesus in his going and coming met a custom house officer and challenged him to become a disciple, and that officer was himself.

Plumptre says: "The reasons for the choice of Capernaum lie, some of them, on the surface. (1) Its position on the shore of the lake, as a town with a garrison and a custom house, made it the natural center of the fishing trade of the Lake of Galilee. (2) It was near enough to Nazareth to make it possible to visit that place if desired, and to make it possible for his mother and brethren to keep in touch with him. (3) The presence of publicans and sinners helped him to touch a class of men who were despised by others, but capable of much love and fine service. (4) Lastly, St. John's narrative supplies another link. The healing of the son of one of the tetrarch's officers at Capernaum had, we may well believe, secured there a certain degree of protection and influence."

Whatever the motives which prompted Jesus to live in Capernaum, we can never forget the significance of the place to us who read and believe the gospel. It was here that he did many wondrous deeds. It was here he found ordinary men and made them great through the work he gave them to do. It was here that he stretched forth his arms and cried, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest!" No wonder that when excavators found the foundations of what they believed to be the synagogue built by the centurion, their hearts were thrilled because a new link had been found which bound them more closely to the Burden-bearer of the race!

Almighty God, we linger lovingly over the footsteps of our Lord Christ: and we adore thee for the love which prompted thy gift of so wonderful a Saviour! May we find his rest, may we learn his method of living! In his name. Amen.

Wednesday, 20th. Luke 5. 1-11.

Ross says: "As we make our way to the Lake to watch what is going to happen, we find ourselves amid the crowd that throngs the shore, and are surprised that it is so large, so dense, so eager. What is the explanation? Is it not that here was a fisher of men who knew his business? How skilful he was! Sometimes he used stories for bait. Sometimes he took a spacious net and flung it wide, so that the learned and the simple, the old and the young, were caught by a common interest. But always he reached and touched the profoundest depths of the human spirit, using weights unseen but felt, which sank his message down till there seemed no hiding place from the skill of his pursuit. It is well that he should teach his secret to those who come after him in the same endeavor, for, as things often go, their nets are more likely to be spoiled by unskilful handling than to be broken by the weight of their catch."

The story is very human, and its spiritual content is precious. We can feel with Peter as he replies to Jesus. He stood there a trained fisherman who had spent the livelong night in an empty quest. Jesus appears, and challenges him in the presence of a crowd. Jesus, who was not a fisherman, asked a professional fisherman to fish in broad daylight in a lake which had yielded nothing in the most likely hours. No wonder Peter felt he was liable to be humiliated! Nevertheless he would not deny the open wish of him who had become his master. It was evidently Christ's hour. If he persisted in the face of warning as to the barren waters, it was his problem, and so the nets were lowered, and such success had never been seen before! The significance of the act was the more emphatic in light of the fact that at that time there were reported to be something like 4000 fishing boats plying their trade on the Lake.

What must those men have felt as they witnessed the spectacle? Jesus would indeed capture their imagination. From that time he could not escape the crowds. They followed him from one side of the lake to the other. They followed to the desert. They stayed with him three days at a time. They were eager now to hear the word of God, for here was a man who knew something about fishing which they never heard of or imagined.

That there was something more in the incident than a miracle to capture the imagination is obvious, for Peter fell down before the wonder-worker, and acknowledged the divinity that stood revealed, and confessed the sin which made the presence awful. Do not imagine that Peter must have been a terribly wicked man! His confession indicates rather a man who earnestly desired to walk with God. All that we know of him from other Scriptures indicates a man who wanted to live a worthy life.

Our Father in heaven, teach us how to win others for thee! May our contact with others be for their good and thy glory! Help us in the midst of our discouragements to think of our Master, and like him to labor believingly! Amen.

Thursday, 21st. Mark 1. 21-34.

Mark's arrangement of incidents has little relation to time. It is not his interest to say that on such a day of such a week Jesus did certain things, but that in connection with such and such a journey Jesus did and said things which showed certain qualities or produced certain effects. His first object is to bring out the idea of the authority of Christ. He shows it in his challenge to men to become disciples. He shows it in his preaching in the synagogue. He speaks as one who knows, he interprets as only a student who has penetrated to the heart of a document is qualified to do. He faces dæmons and all manner of diseases with the same absolute confidence. He discusses the most cherished institutions with the same certainty of understanding.

J. D. Jones says: "We get Jesus Christ as the authoritative teacher. What kind of authority was it Jesus Christ possessed? (1) It was the authority of character. The scribes had the kind of authority which comes from office, but it was not that kind of authority Jesus wielded. (2) It was the authority of perfect knowledge. . . . . But it was not authoritative speech alone the people discovered in Jesus, but (3) authoritative power as well."

Mark not only presents a picture of the authority of Christ, but also a sense of the breadth and scope of his work. We see him on land and sea, in the early morning and in the twilight, in the synagogue and in the home, among busy men and surrounded with invalids. How arduous were his days, how broad his sympathies! It is a moving spectacle which confronts us as we peruse these chapters from the shortest of the Gospels. They show us Jesus in intimate relations with common folk.

Almighty God our Father, thou art never far from any one of us! In the throng and press of life thou dost reveal thyself, and dost send a strange peace and warmth into our souls. May we know thy presence today! Amen.

Friday, 22nd. Mark 1. 35-39.

There is a beautiful story of an old saint who labored long in his study, and at the end simply turned to his Father in heaven to say in prayer, "You know that all is right between us!" But I wonder what Jesus would have thought of living like that? His days were long, and laden with responsibilities. He had not time so much as to eat. Yet he felt the impulse to pray, and indeed the necessity for prayer, so strongly that a long while before dawn he left his couch, left the house where there was risk of disturbance, and sought the solitude of the hills in order to pray.

Study is no substitute for prayer, any more than service of however pressing a nature. Ultimately we shall exhaust our sympathy and our power to soothe and strengthen unless we keep in constant touch with him from whom all power comes. Scholarly preaching is highly to be prized, but dynamic preaching is an imperative necessity, and this does not come from study, but from prayer. Jesus could not have spoken with divine authority, nor have faced all manner of sicknesses with assurance, had he not been in close contact with his Father.

The disciples came hunting Jesus, eager to have him meet the crowds who were surging through the town looking for him. Why did Peter think that the popularity of the hour was more important than the consciousness of God? Matthew Henry said, "Those that have most business in public, and of the best kind, must sometimes be alone with God: must retire into solitude, there to converse with God, and keep up communion with him." Jesus found rest, restoration of energy, strength from communion with his Father.

Did Jesus go back with them to meet the excited crowds? Or did he simply announce his intention to go to other places proclaiming the good news of the kingdom? He was not to be localized. His mission was to the people, and he was just as eager to preach in the small towns and villages of Galilee as in market centers such as Capernaum. After all, crowds are not everything. What is of moment is the discovery of men. I have heard of a village Sunday school in Illinois where a simple woman

had a class of 17 boys. Half of those boys have become famous, mainly as educators.

O Lord our God, teach us to pray! Give us power to change men, to move them to higher ways of living, to give them thy peace! In Christ's name. Amen.

Saturday, 23rd. Mark 1. 40-45.

No story in the Gospels shows Jesus in a more attractive light than this record of his healing the leper. It is not necessary to describe the terrible nature of the disease, the loathsomeness of its attack on the human body, the spiritual suffering of its victims, cut off as they were from association with their loved ones and with the world in which they were wont to play a part, and especially from the house of God. To go near them meant the risk of ceremonial defilement.

When Jesus was entreated by this man to help him it would have been easy for him to have said, "Go thy way: according to thy faith be it done unto thee!" But instead, he put forth his hand and touched him. This was to court defilement, but what mattered ceremonial defilement if a touch might bring comfort and healing to one so unfortunate?

What a splendid man this leper must have been! When he cried to Jesus he did not seem to think of there being any possible limit to his power.

When Jesus had responded to his petition and cured him, Mark tells us something strange: he says that Jesus spoke to the man sternly, and even sharply, as one irritated, and then laid hold on the man, thrust him away, and commanded him to go to Jerusalem and show himself to the priests, but meanwhile to tell no man. Why? Did he wish to avoid the embarrassment of being compelled to desist work until he became ceremonially clean? Did he dread the notoriety which would interfere with his supreme work of preaching the gospel? Certainly the man's disobedience to the injunction of Jesus did this very thing: for the news greatly excited the people and caused them to be all the more eager to see him work miracles. The immediate effect was that Jesus had to try to get away to the desert: yet even here people flocked to him, and that not to learn the way of life, but to see him cure them of their sicknesses. We know that even today there is always great excitement when anyone appears as a faith-healer. People are always exaggerating the importance of the body and minimizing the far more dangerous sicknesses of the soul.

Almighty God, we come to thee with our burdens, and rejoice that thou art able and willing to deliver us from them! Thou art moved with compassion as we entreat thy aid. But we need thy instruction, we need to learn the nature of thy kingdom, and to make it the chief concern of our lives. Help us in this, we beseech thee. In Christ's name. Amen.

Sunday, 24th. Mark 2. 1-5.

What is the explanation of those animosities which spring up in the souls of religious people and lead them to do things which are unspeakable? If we read verses 6. 16, and 18 of this chapter and verse 6 of chapter 3, we may see. First we become critical. We do not speak about our suspicions, but we inwardly dissent from the words or methods of the man of God whose ministry we witness. Then we begin to ask questions of his supporters, with a view to finding some flaw in his words or deeds. Then we go to him and challenge his integrity, his motives or his policy. Then we resolve that he must be got out of the way, and we organize our forces, even to the extent of making alliances with people whose general motives and practices we do not endorse.

This was the way things happened among the Pharisees, who as a matter of fact were a splendid people, but capable of doing cruel and even wicked things when once their prejudices had committed them to a policy. Let us ponder this side of the teaching on our knees, lest we also become persecutors of some man of God from whom we differ!

In contrast with the developing animosity of the good men who resented Jesus' attitude toward cherished beliefs, we have a beautiful picture of friendship, and what it can accomplish. Bruce speaks of it as "vicarious faith," and that is a happy phrase. These men associated their friend with the manifest power and willingness of Jesus to succor those who were in need. They not merely thought of the possibility, but organized themselves to bring the two into contact with each other. It shows that even in their young manhood they had found leisure enough to visit their friend and to try to help him bear his load. His trouble was twofold: he suffered the nervous and mental distress which is the inevitable accompaniment of paralysis, and he also suffered because of the ideas in which he had been reared, that physical pain is the sign of the punishment of God, inflicted because we have sinned.

Our God and Father, we rejoice in the knowledge that thy friendship for us is deeper and more constant than that of our nearest and dearest earthly friends! Yet we rejoice in the gift of friendship from those whom thou hast made. Help us to live worthy of human and divine love! Amen.

Monday, 25th. Mark 2. 6-12.

In noticing the approach made by Jesus to the paralytic, we need to observe the term with which he addressed him. He

called him "Son," or "Child." That is a tender word. It would be used for a disciple, or anyone who was taken into the inner circle. It was an encouraging word, for it meant that Jesus looked on him with tender regard. The affection behind the word could not fail to impress the sufferer.

Jesus at once addresses himself to what must have been a torment to the man; for the word used is not "Thy sins BE forgiven," but "Thy sins ARE forgiven," something which has already happened. The man is tormenting himself about a condition which has already ceased to exist in the mind of God. The rabbis had asserted, "There is no sick man healed of his sickness until all his sins have been forgiven him." Jesus begins at that point by declaring that sin is forgiven.

By what authority did Jesus dare to make such an assertion? The man had not been taken to the priests. No sacrifices had been offered. The whole transaction appeared to these men to involve an assumption of prerogatives which belonged to God alone. So without uttering a word they came to the conviction in their hearts that Jesus was a blasphemer. Looking into their faces, he saw what was going on, and therefore challenged the evil spirit into the open. In order to confirm his declaration in accordance with their theories, he commanded the paralytic to arise, take up his bed, and walk: and the miracle was so complete as to produce astonishment such as made men exclaim.

The intuitions of Jesus were a matter of frequent note. He read the thoughts of the heart so directly as to make men marvel. So he knew what this poor sufferer was enduring, and immediately set his mind at rest. He knew what these men were reasoning in their minds, and accepting the challenge, did what their own theory demanded, proved forgiveness by working an instant and complete cure. Yet the prejudice which had been entertained continued to grow until within a very brief period an organized conspiracy was formed, and from it there was no escape. When at last Jesus was arrested and tried, it was on the charge which they cherished in their hearts as they saw him look with tenderness on this afflicted man, and heard him bring the word of spiritual release.

Our Master, we praise thee that thou art not to be turned back by the malice of men! Thy love is so tender and true that thou wilt come to our aid, whatever the hazard to thyself. Thou art our constant friend, our shepherd, our guide. May we trust thee at all times! Amen.

Tuesday, 26th. Mark 2. 13-17.

We now see Jesus in the highway of life, meeting a man whose occupation gave offence to his fellow countrymen, who was judged because he belonged to a class whose occupation was offensive and who had also brought upon themselves censure because of the unscrupulous manner in which they had extorted money from the people. It is unfair to judge people in such summary fashion. Men like Levi and Zaccheus are of too lofty and spiritual a type to be dismissed as unworthy and disloyal. Jesus stands out as one who was free from suspiciousness.

The challenge of Jesus was met by an immediate and noble response. Levi surrendered position, wealth, everything, for Jesus' sake. And as one has said, whereas the fishermen returned to their fishing after the resurrection, Matthew (like Paul,) left all, and left it altogether.

The consequences of calling Levi were serious. It may be that had Jesus simply challenged the man and made him a disciple, he would have escaped with mild criticism, but when he accepted an invitation to dine with Levi's friends he identified himself with a class: and for such an act he was considered to have broken all laws of propriety, and even morality. What should we think if a well known minister were reported to have gone to a midnight party with people of the Follies? We should say that he was in danger of compromising himself. We should feel that society had some claims on him, and that his standing as a minister of the gospel demanded that he refrain from compromising himself. Yet it might be that he had gone to speak to the people in his Master's name. It might be that he had found someone in the company who was splendid, and who was arranging for him to meet in order to help the rest. Social proprieties are, after all, to be held in their proper place. Jesus had to face the suspicion and also the judgment of the outstanding religious people of his time. They said he was the friend of publicans and sinners, and even dared to eat with them.

How strange it is that what was a reason for suspicion and even rejection should have become one of the most appealing aspects of the story of Jesus! How many poor broken souls have been won by the fact that Jesus Christ would be their friend, even when all else gave them the cold shoulder! How resistless is the church of Christ when it goes forth on the high quest for souls, and adventures into the highways and hedges, bringing the lost ones back to the home of their Father!

O God our Father, give us a deeper sense of what we owe to Jesus Christ! Help us to see our fellowmen as objects of his love! Help us to understand them and to win them for thee! Amen.

Wednesday, 27th. John 5. 1-9.

Robinson says: "The present order of chapters or talks is also the natural order of topics to be expected if due weight be given

to conditions in the country in which the Gospel was writen. In Asia Minor disease was as great, if not a greater, menace to life than lack of food. After the talk on an adequate water supply there might follow either a talk on an adequate food supply, or one on adequate protection against ill health. It is not unlikely that a popular Ephesian audience would give a discourse on ill health and its cure precedence over a talk on food. This explanation draws 4. 46-54, which is likewise a narrative of healing, into the picture. In an arrangement of material used in these talks by subjects, the cures naturally belong together as we have them. The symbolism is the same in the healing of the nobleman's son and in the present narrative."

What marvels were accomplished by Jesus! At one time he tells a man that his prayer is answered and his distant son has been restored. At another time he confronts a man who has been a cripple for 38 years, and with a word breaks the chain of disease and restores vigor to paralyzed limbs. Jesus believed in being in good health. He did not think that blindness, deafness, or paralyzed limbs were to be tolerated and accepted as the will of God. He believed that a sick man ought to want to be healthy and to use what resources were available to that end. Jesus had resources of knowledge and power, and he used them to the full.

We ought to do the same. One of those resources is prayer, and another is faith. We ought not to be careless about any resources. We should avoid what will bring sickness, we should do what will guard against sickness. When sick we should use all knowledge and power that are available through doctors and nurses. But we should also call upon God and believe that he can and will come to our aid.

O Lord our God, thou art the healer of all our diseases! All wisdom comes from thee. Teach us how to live! May all we do be according to thy will! In Christ's name. Amen.

Thursday, 28th. John 5. 10-47.

An act such as that wrought by Jesus was gracious enough to have made men wonder, but unfortunately for him he wrought it on the sabbath day, and that brought him up against the traditions and prejudices of the Pharisees.

Headlam says: "Here the most sacred prejudices of Judaism were touched. There is always a tendency in a certain type of religious mind towards a scrupulous strictness of observance, and this in the case of the Jews had appeared in its most rigid form in the regulations that had grown up about the sabbath. It was these customs that more than anything else preserved the separation between the Jew and Gentile. In the Hellenizing period before the Maccabean revolt, one of the signs of unfaithfulness was extreme laxity concerning the sabbath: and that will help us to understand the fanatical adherence to what was supposed to be the law, which caused over a thousand refugees to be massacred in a cave without making any defence rather than be guilty of breaking the sabbath. This incident led to some modification of the custom, but there were many other occasions in history when the Jews allowed their strict adherence to religious rule to hamper them in warefare."

Jesus confronted a sabbath fenced with all manner of regulations. Because life is not a simple thing the scribes had had to develop all manner of exceptions to their rules, with the result that the spiritual significance of the day was in danger of being entirely overlooked. Jesus brought to the problem the freshness and spirituality which were inherent in him. Communion with his Father, doing the works of his Father, manifesting the spirit of his Father, these were his primary considerations, and every event was considered in the light of them. The result was inevitable. He was criticized and opposed, he was accused of wickedness, he was regarded as a blasphemer, he was judged worthy of death, even of stoning.

In face of all such opposition he went on with his work of doing good. And slowly but surely his spirit is conquering.

Almighty Father, we pray for all who are in distress, especially those who are in hospitals and institutions for the care of the afflicted! We give thee thanks for our own well-being. We pray that we may consecrate our bodies to thy service. Amen.

Friday, 29th. Mark 3. 1-6.

The incident is typical. Jesus encounters a man with a withered hand, and heals him. But he does this on the sabbath day, and such an incident is an outrage to the religious convictions of the Pharisees. Their minds are closed. They are not interested in goodness unless it expresses itself in their way. Institutions strangled the inner life.

It was this aspect of the case which roused Jesus. Bigotry led to cruelty and inhumanity, and this Jesus could not endure. His indignation was real. He resented the malice and the unfairness of the whole proceeding, and especially that it should be done in the name of his holy and gracious Father. That is the serious aspect of bigotry: it hides behind the name of God. Indeed, some of its cruelest forms have hidden behind the name of Jesus Christ.

The immediate result of the controversy was the alliance of the Pharisees and Herodians against Jesus. It was a coming together of the most unlikely people in order to accomplish a wicked end. The

very religious ally themselves with unscrupulous politicians to accomplish the undoing of a man! All that the Pharisees were not, all that they most deplored and were organized to resist, that the Herodians were: yet the two parties got together in order to put out of the way a harmless man whose offence consisted in being kind to people and preaching the wondrous grace of God. What will not prejudice and bigotry lead men to do! If there is one thing we should dread today it is the partisanship which in the name of religion leads us to besmirch the characters of godly men because they do not belong to our group.

Dear Lord and Father of us all, cleanse us from all defilement of flesh and spirit! Give us courage to defend thy cause! Teach us how to express the spirit of Jesus! Amen.

Saturday, 30th. Mark 3. 7-12.

How far was Jesus aware of the plot to kill him? Mark does not tell us. Luke says that some friendly Pharisees came to him with the report that Herod had determined to kill him, but in this passage Mark reveals no haste or confusion in the life of Jesus. He had a work to do which required his utmost attention. Therefore he withdrew from the district where there was danger, and set about consolidating his work among those who were his immediate followers. Jesus had come to work the works of God, and these did not consist simply in healing people who were sick and blessing little children and befriending fallen women and publicans. The works of God included being betrayed by men, and spat upon, and put to death. All this was part of his predestined experience. He knew it, declared it, steadfastly set his face toward it. To ignore or forget the cross is to miss the meaning of Jesus. His crucifixion was not accidental, it was inevitable if the works of God were to be accomplished by him and if men were to find life eternal.

Mark summarizes a period of work in these few verses, and shows us an exceedingly busy Master working and saying wondrous things, yet with a deep and urgent purpose in his mind.

Why should Jesus withdraw himself from clamoring multitudes who needed help, and who by his power might find life entirely transformed? Surely a living Christ who could heal was more important than a dead Christ? No, he was not: and we modern people need to face the fact, as we are not doing today. There is something more the matter with us than can be cured by a doctor. Our hurt is spiritual, and we need, far more deeply than can be expressed, deliverance from sin.

So we see the amazing throngs, the wonder-works that thrilled them, the excited hopes that this may prove to be the very Christ: and then the deliberate request for a boat that he may shake himself free from the multitudes, and get away to a lonely spot where he might instruct his disciples in those truths by which the whole world may be delivered from evil, and every aspect of human life may become new.

Our Father, forgive us that having known our Master so long we should know him so little! Teach us how to be like him! Give us courage to espouse his cause! May we stand for truth, peace, purity, devotion to thee, brotherhood! Amen.

Sunday, 31st. Mark 3. 13-17.

When Jesus undertook the organization of his campaign which ultimately developed into what we call the church, he did not accept volunteers. He was too wise and too much in earnest to do that. He picked his men. He chose those whom he felt to be fitted for the reception of his message and the adoption of his method. He exercised his own discretion. The men were of a common class. One was a tax-collector, four were fishermen, another had some financial ability. As to the remainder, we know practically nothing. Their names have not lived in the annals of the church. They seem to have been men of good and honest heart, and such like men are capable of bringing forth much fruit.

The motive which prompted him in making the choice seems to have been an attempt to prepare for the inevitable result of the plotting of the Pharisees and the Herodians.

What was expected of a disciple? We are not told. There were certain things which seem to have developed. First, of course there was personal attachment to Jesus. The chosen men were such as would be true to him because they felt that in him which we call leadership. Jesus did not apparently lay down rules such as John the Baptist imposed. He did not tell them to fast. They had to come to him with a request before he taught them how to pray. They were to be with him, and it was by the contagion of example that they were to be moulded into his pattern. It seems as if he needed assistance in grappling with the multitudes, but that in itself was not what led him to select them. He wanted them with him to train for the work of imparting his deepest message: men to whom he could impart the mystery of the kingdom of God, so that when his hour was come and he was called away, they might be his witnesses in all the earth.

O God, we seek to become Christlike! We would work thy works in the world. We would bring the knowledge of thy love to those with whom we are thrown in contact. We pray that our lives may reflect thy Spirit. Amen.